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Comparative study of Horace and Ben Jonson

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF HORACE AND BEN JONSON

by

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PREFACE

Ben Jonson, born in Westminster in 1573, is usually considered the great English Classicist of his century, and his literary output is so permeated with references to writers of antiquity that his high regard for their works is obvious. He was an ardent student of Greek and Latin, and the influence of ancient authors is very makred in his works. I have attempted to point out some of the similarities between him and Horace.

This Latin author Ben Jonson has translated, paraphrased, and imitated, and in some instances he has borrowed his thoughts. Horace's Satires, Epistles, Odes, and Epodes, which contain compliments to friends, didactic material, and literary criticism, exerted considerable influence upon Jonson's poetry. In addition to borrowing extensively from Horace, the English poet translated at least one epode and two of the odes. In general, Jonson's poetry reflects so many Horatian sentiments that it is evident Horace was one of the greatest influences on his writings.

Naturally some differences must be noticed in their literary production. The method of handling material is a result of the differences in the personalities of the writers, as well as of the condition of the times. Horace's subtle touch is perceptible in his writings, whereas Jonson's bluntness is very evident most of the time. Despite their

differences, however, both Horace and Jonson have bequeathed to posterity, through the medium of letters, a picture of their minds and characters, in addition to an image of the times in which they lived. It is the mosaic pieces of such a picture that I have attempted to put together within one frame to show that Horace's influence on Ben Jonson was great enough to make the latter the Horace of the seventeenth century, as well as the Latin bard's most ardent admirer.

For the Latin quotations and translations of the Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica I have used the Loeb edition of H. Rushton Fairclough; for the Odes and Epodes I have used the Loeb edition of C.E. Bennett.

As reference for the plays and poetry of Ben Jonson I have used Ben Jonson edited by C.H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson. In quoting lines I have given the words as found in these volumes since these are Jonson's lines rather than the modernized rendition found elsewhere.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. W.P. Clark for his invaluable suggestions in the writing of this thesis, and for his kindly encouragement given so generously during the years I have spent under his guidance. This work of mine would be most unfinished if I were not to say to him in the lines of Horace: "Non ego te meis chartis inornatum silebo." I wish here also to acknowledge a debt of gratitude

to Miss Nan C. Carpenter for a critical reading of my manuscript.

A.O'L.

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CHAPTER I

PARALLELS IN THE LIVES OF HORACE AND BEN JONSON

Though separated in time by over sixteen centuries, Quintus Horatius Flaccus, born in the little town of Venusia on December 8, 65 B.C., left a visible imprint on the writings of Ben Jonson, great English classicist of the seventeenth century. In many ways their very lives are parallel to each other, and it is little wonder that the English dramatist and poet felt a kinship with the Latin bard. Even the ages in which they lived were comparable to each other in some ways. As one star differs from another star in glory, one man's art from another's scope, so Horace and Ben Jonson differ. Yet the likenesses in their lives and the general sentiment which their writings convey are often striking, and both men left monuments in the literary world which are more lasting than bronze. It is these memorials which evidence the similarities in the lives and works of each.

Both men were of humble origin, though each looked at his parentage in a wholly different perspective. When his enemies reproached him with the fact that his father had been a libertinus, that he was only the son of a slave,

or as Suetonius says: "patre ut ipse tradit libertino et exactionum coactore ut vero creditum est salsamentario ..."[1] ("as he himself writes, a freedman who was a collector of money at auctions, but it is believed that he was a dealer in salted provisions"), the quick retort or shamed excuse was not for the loyal, parent-loving Horace. Instead, his enemies and posterity were given the memorable tribute of which any father would be proud:

> Nil me paeniteat sanum patris huius, eoque
> Non, ut magna dolo factum negat esse suo pars,
> Quod non ingenuos habeat clarosque parentis,
> Sic me defendam. Longe mea discrepat istis
> Et vox et ratio: nam si natura iuberet
> A certis annis aevum remeare peractum,
> Atque alios legere ad fastum quoscumque parentis
> Optaret sibi quisque, meis contentus, honestos
> Fascibus et sellis nollem mihi sumere, demens
> Iudicio volgi, sanus fortasse tuo, quod
> Nollem onus haud umquam solitus portare molestum.[2]

("Never while in my senses could I be ashamed of such a father, and so I will not defend myself, as would a goodly number, who say it is no fault of their that they have not free-born and famous parents. Far different from this is what I say and what I think: for if after a given age Nature should call us to traverse our past lives again, and to choose in keeping with our pride any other parents each might crave -- content with my own, I should decline to take those adorned with the rods and chairs of state. And though the world would deem me mad, you,[3] I hope, would think me sane for declining to shoulder a burden of trouble to which I have never been accustomed.")

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[1]Suetonius, "Vita Horati", De Illustribus Viris, trans. J.C.Rolfe, (2 vols., "Loeb Classical Library"; London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1914), II, 484.

[2]Horace Serm. 1. 6. 89-99.

[3]Horace is addressing Maecenas in this passage.

But such were not the sentiments of Ben Jonson. He was a minister's son, born one month after his father's death, and as tradition suggests early in his youth he was put to work as a bricklayer, following the occupation of his stepfather.[1] This trade, as Ben later related to Drummond, was something "which he could not endure."[2] Perhaps in later life Jonson recalled his stepfather's supposed answer to his mother when the subject of sending the boy to Westminster School instead of a school within the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields was brought up: "Well, Annie, he's your boy and I'm willin' he should waste his time if you are. For a while, mind you, though, for a while."[3] This might have been Ben's personal reminiscence when he introduced Ovid as the object of his father's belittling remarks against poetry in the first act of the play entitled Poetaster.[4] Whether narrowness of means or avarice accounted for his stepfather's attitude is questionable, but at any rate Ben Jonson went on to Westminster. Though he did not graduate, he became

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[1]Ben Jonson, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson (10 vols., Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1925-1950), I, 2.

[2]William Drummond, "Notes of Conversations with Ben Jonson made by William Drummond of Hawthornden, January 1619," Ben Jonson, Discoveries 1641. Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden 1619, transcript of Sir Robert Sibbald's manuscript by Miss E.B. Hutchen (London: John Lane The Bodley Head Ltd.; New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1923), p. 11.

[3]Byron Steel, O Rare Ben Jonson, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), p. 12.

[4]Ben Jonson, Poetaster, I.11.

an accomplished scholar and one very widely read in Greek and Latin literature through the assistance and generosity of William Camden,[1] who was acclaimed the greatest scholar in England because of his book Britannia.[2] On the other hand, Horace's father had, by personal and financial sacrifice, taken him to Rome, provided him with the best instruction possible and in addition watched over the boy's moral training as well. That he acted as paedagogus[3] and laid the foundation of ethical interest which is found in Horace's later writings is revealed in the sixth satire in Book One:

> Atqui si vitiis mediocribus ac mea paucis
> Mendosa est natura, alioqui recta, velut si
> Egregio inspersos reprehendas corpore naevos
> Si neque avaritiam neque sordes nec mala lustra
> Obiciet vere quisquam mihi, purus et insons,
> Ut me collaudem, si et vivo carus amicis:
> Causa fuit pater his ...[4]

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[1]William Gifford, "Memoirs of Ben Jonson," The Works of Ben Jonson, ed. Lieut.-Col. Francis Cunningham, (3 vols., London: Chatto and Windus, 1910), I, viii-ix.

[2]Allan H. Gilbert, The Symbolic Persons in the Masques of Ben Jonson, (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1948), p. 105. See also George Burke Jonston, Ben Jonson; Poet, New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), p. 74 and p. 107. Also J.N. Larned, "The New Larned History," ed. D.E. Smith, C. Seymour, A. Shearer, D. Knowlton, (12 vols., Springfield, Massachusetts: C.A. Nichols Publishing Company, 1851-1924) V, 4084.

[3]The paedagogus was a confidential slave detailed to supervise his young master's conduct and keep him from dangers, especially moral ones. See H.J. Rose, A Handbook of Latin Literature (2nd ed. rev.; London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1949), p. 266.

[4]Horace Serm. 1. 6. 65-71

("And yet, if the flaws that mar my otherwise sound nature are but trifling and few in number, even as you might find fault with moles spotted over a comely person -- if no one will justly lay to my charge avarice or meanness or lewdness; if, to venture on self-praise, my life is free from stain and guilt and I am loved by my friends -- I owe this to my father.")

But these occupations did not last long for either Horace or Jonson. Then, as now, war interrupted young men's ambitions, or offered them a release from work which had become a drudgery. Horace had come to study in Athens, but soon after the assassination of Caesar in March of 44 B.C. his formal schooling ended. Brutus, arriving in Athens the following autumn,[1] presumably inspired the youthful Horace to join the republican faction.[2] Soon he received the appointment of tribunus militum in Brutus' army,[3] and according to his own statement[4] he commanded a Roman legion, but this was an insignificant position since each legion had six tribunes. However, military life was short-lived for Horace and he returned to Rome in 41 B.C. when the gates

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[1] W.Y. Sellar, The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age (London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1899), p. 14.

[2] Edward P. Morris (ed.), Horace, Satires and Epistles (New York: The American Book Company, 1909), p. 7.

[3] Suetonius "Vita Horati", II, 485

[4] Horace Serm. 1. 6. 46-48.

were opened to him during an amnesty.[1] In the meantime the estate he had inherited from his father had been confiscated by Octavius because of Horace's participation in the war in support of Brutus and Cassius. However, though decisis humilem pennis[2] ("his wings were clipped"), poverty had its compensations because it drove him to writing verses.[3] These early verses, while they attracted general notice because they spoke in a derogatory manner about persons in high positions, also indicated exceptional talent to Vergil and Varius.[4] Such were the events which occurred before and at the time when Horace began to write seriously.

War also offered its enticements to Ben Jonson. A release from the odious employment as bricklayer and a chance for adventure were not to be taken lightly. War was being fought in the Low Countries and Jonson enlisted. As with Horace, no Congressional Medal of Honor was given to Ben for his service to his country, and only twice does he refer to this period of his life. In an Horatian epigram "Unto True Soldiers" he speaks of it thus:

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[1]Horace, Odes and Epodes, trans. C.E. Bennett, ("Loeb Classical Library"; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1948), Introduction, p. vi.

[2]Horace Epist. ii. 2.50.

[3]Ibid., 50-52.

[4]Horace Serm. 1.2; 1.7: 1.8. Cf. Morris, Ad Serm. 1.2

> I sweare by your true friend, my Muse, I loue
> Your great profession, which I once did proue;
> And did not shame it with my actions, then,
> No more then I dare, now, doe with my pen.[1]

Also in Drummond's notes another reference is made to his life as a soldier: "In his Servuce in the Low Countries, he had in the face of both Campes Killed ane Enimie & taken opima spoilia from him."[2] This warlike achievement may have been exaggerated by Jonson since the incident could be remembered with advantage so many years after it had occurred, just as it was to Horace's advantage to minimize his war service. Yet Jonson's life proved him a fighter whether with a pen or a sword, and it is not inconceivable that he would welcome a hand-to-hand combat, and feel himself superior to his friend Horace who in the battle of Philippi left his "shield ingloriously behind."[3] When Ben returned to London, he turned to writing and acting but was not successful in these early years as he himself says in his Prologue to The Sad Shepherd.[4] That he was a member of the humbler troupes is likewise confirmed by Thomas Dekker and John Marston who satirized Ben Jonson in

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[1]Ben Jonson, Poetaster, Apologetical Dialogue, lines 135-140.

[2]William Drummond, "Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden, January 1619," p. 11.

[3]Horace Carm. ii. 7. 9-12.

[4]Ben Jonson, The Sad Shepherd, lines 1-31.

the Satiromastix by referring to him thus: "I ha seene thy shoulders lapt in a Plaiers old cast Cloake, like a Slie knave as thou art."[1] This play written by the men upon whom Jonson had shot satiric shafts in the Poetaster was neither humorous nor witty in itself, and such a remark could only amuse an audience if it were true. As in the case of Horace one of Jonson's friends was instrumental in bringing him into public view as an author. According to one legend, it was William Shakespeare who induced the Lord Chamberlain's men to buy Every Man in His Humour, which was performed before the close of 1598.[2]

Both Horace and Jonson lived the greater part of their lives under noble patrons. To the patrons of each, literature owes a debt of gratitude for fostering art in these men. Without his patron, Horace might have remained in the position of clerkship in the Treasury[3] and his writings might have been no more than the pessimism of the Sixteenth Epode and the scurrilous lampoons of his early satire. With the battle of Philippi the hopes of the republican faction crashed, and Horace was forced to look at the future objectively. In a sense he became an opportunist. His introduction to Maecenas through the

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[1]Ben Jonson, ed. C.H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, I, 13.

[2]Richard Garnett and Edmund Gosse, English Literature (4 vols.; London: The MacMillan Company, 1904), p. 314

[3]Suetonius, op. cit., II, 485.

influence of his friends Vergil and Varius was the turning point in his literary life. Through the generosity of his patron, Horace along with other poets of the Augustan Age was guaranteed a kind of Social Security which provided him with sufficient means to gratify his tastes, gave him a comfortable home,[1] and offered him the companionship of the inner circle of *literati*. Under such patronage poets could live for art without being encumbered with the business of making a living. However, imperial patronage demanded its price and those whom it favored found that their choice of theme was very limited.

Likewise did Jonson reap the rewards of the age of the patron. He too spent most of his life sitting at the tables of men on whom he depended largely for employment and support. Yet the essential difference in the patrons of Horace and Jonson lies in the fact that the former had many men on whom he depended at various times in his life, whereas the latter was the protégé of Maecenas, Augustus and Agrippa.[2] Of the two, Horace was the more fortunate because his patrons remained his bene-

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[1]Horace *Ep.* 1. 30-32, "Satis superque me benignitas tua ditavit"; cf. *Carm.* iii. 16. 29-38; *Serm.* ii. 6. 1-4; 59-77; *Epist.* i. 16. 15-16.

[2]Agrippa was the right hand of Augustus in war. Horace said he was unable to do justice to Agrippa's achievements (*Carm.* i. 6.), but Augustan poets frequently professed this inability toward their patrons. Cf. W.Y. Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age* (London: Clarendon Press, 1899), p. 134.

factors throughout the remainder of his life.

How Horace was introduced to Maecenas, the able adviser of the future princeps and the man who offered his poetic friends such liberal existence, is told by the poet himself in a satire addressed to Maecenas:

> felicem dicere non hoc
> Me possim, casu quod te sortitus amicum:
> Nulla etenim mihi te fors obtulit; optimus olim
> Vergilius, post hunc Varius, dixere quid essem. [1]

> ("Fortunate I could not call myself as having won your friendship by some chance; for 'twas no case of luck throwing you in my way; that best of men, Vergil some time ago, and after him Varius, told you what manner of man I was.")

Poverty had driven Horace to write poetry, not with the hope of making a fortune from it but rather that his works might attract notice and eventually patronage. Horace expressed himself freely in his early satires and epodes, and in them are the Bohemian remnants of Rome, strange acquaintances, coarse loves and bitter hatreds of these early years. Naturally such writings were the talk of the town and did not escape the notice of Maecenas. He himself was interested in literature and religiously endeavored to put talent to the use of the prospective order of things in Rome. In these early writings of Horace, Maecenas must have detected a rich vein of gold which might be developed for the good of the future ruling clique. At any rate

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[1] Horace Serm. 1. 6. 52-55.

Maecenas wanted to see him and had him introduced by Varius and Vergil. Their first meeting was not very promising, but as Horace recalls later to Maecenas: "abeo, et revocas nono post mense iubesque/esse in amicorum numero."[1] ("I withdrew; then, nine months later, you sent for me again and bade me join your friends.") Evidently Maecenas saw possibilities of using Horace's talents to further the reforms and changes the ruling powers had decided upon. Horace undoubtedly knew that others suspected him of ambitions for political influence and attempted to pass over such suspicions by these lines:

> Dissimile hoc illi est, quia non, ut forsit honorem
> Iure mihi invideat quivis, ita te quoque amicum,
> Praesertim cautum dignos adsumere, prava
> Ambitione procul.[2]
>
> ("This case and that are different, for though perchance anyone may rightly grudge me the office, yet he should not grudge me your friendship as well -- the less so, as you are cautious to choose as friends, only the worthy, who stand aloof from base self-seeking.")

Unquestionably then, Maecenas wanted supporters, not critics. Having gained the favor and friendship of this knight, Horace inevitably came to know Augustus and in time held a prominent place among the friends of both.[3] Having been accepted by these patrons, he henceforth was to do for the "New Deal" what a loyal poet could and should do.

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[1]Horace Serm. 1. 6. 61-62.

[2]Ibid., lines 49-52.

[3]Suetonius, op. cit., II, 485.

In much the same manner the fame of Every Man out of His Humour brought Jonson to the notice of Queen Elizabeth but not with such a happy result as Horace's acquaintence with Maecenas. In compliment to her Majesty's presence he had written an epilogue. In his own tactless way he managed to include in it all the subjects which should be avoided in addressing Elizabeth: reference to time, suggestion that she might need a successor, and an allusion to the Earl of Essex. Nor did Cynthia's Revels, containing an analogy between Diana justifying the death of Actaeon and Elizabeth absolving herself from the death of Essex, bring him into her favor. Yet he enjoyed the hospitality of many other people of note in his time. He lived with his patrons or busied imself in arranging festivities at the noble houses of England, especially Althorp, Theobald, or Connington.[1] The fine table Ben required, the society which stimulated him, and the books he needed were all provided him by the hospitality which was the fashion of his day. Among these patrons were Esmé, Lord d'Aubigny, in whose house Jonson lived for five years, Sir Robert Cotton with whom he was living when his eldest son died of the plague, Richard Martin the lawyer who intervened for Jonson when he was indicted for the Poetaster with its Apologetical Dialogue, and the Earl of Salisbury to whom he appealed when he was

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[1]John Palmer, Ben Jonson, (New York: The Viking Press, 1934), p. 69.

imprisoned for his work in Eastward Ho.

Though he had been unsuccessful with Queen Elizabeth, Jonson reached the culmination of his ambitions through her successor. King James was a scholar, noted for his love of learning, and one known to be partial to men of learning. His meeting with the man who had strewn his path through Westminster with classical allusions and who had hailed him as a peacemaker and father of prosperity on the occasion of his coronation probably took place in 1604 on May Day when Sir William Cornwallis entertained both King James and Queen Anne at Highgate.[1] For Jonson this meeting culminated in a royal patron through whose generosity the English poet later received what was essentially the pension of laureate.[2] Lacking the popular touch, Jonson had left the common stage but he found a more discerning public as Horace had in his coterie of friends. Horace, in saying " Odi profanum vulgus et arceo"[3] ("I hate the uninitiate crowd and keep them far away") was referring to the multitude who could not profitably read his poetry. So too Jonson sought the companionship of the educated, and for this reason was attracted to the noblemen of his day. His circle of friends may be traced in his dedications: the Inns of Court, Lord d'Aubigny, Sir Francis Stuart, William Earl of Pembroke. Thus both Horace

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[1]Palmer, op. cit., p. 81.

[2]Ibid., p. 208.

[3]Horace, Carm. iii. 1.1.

and Jonson scorned the common crowd and gained admittance to the circle of the intelligentsia.

At times even in their attitudes toward their benefactors Horace and Jonson were alike, though Horace hardly matched the British poet in independence of spirit. Despite the fact that both were dependent upon their patrons, each declared his independence -- Horace less often and hesitantly, Ben frequently and openly. Both sing the praises of their patrons, and exaggerated submissiveness can be found in both but less flagrantly in Jonson, who oftentimes gives the impression that he is merely reaping the just reward for his Muse. But Horace is extremely extravagant in his eulogies to the Emperor. Probably the most outright flattery is contained in the ode to Augustus in which Horace sees Mercury in the guise of Octavius and prays that he may remain long on earth as the protector of Rome.[1] In another ode he compares Augustus with Jove who, in struggling with the giants, suggests the Emperor in his battle against the forces of disorder.[2] Again he sings in allegory the praises of the benign ruler Augustus,[3] and condemns those who oppose him to "the blind Titanic powers that sought to overthrow the fairer order established by Zeus and the bright Olympian deities."[4]

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[1]Horace, Carm. 1.2. 41-52

[2]Horace, Carm. iii. 1.5-8

[3]Horace, Carm. iii. 4.42-64

[4]Paul Shorey, Horace Odes and Epodes, (rev. Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing; Chicago: Benj. Sanborn and Co. 1936). Ad Carm. iii. 4.42

Throughout the Third Book of Odes Horace praises patriotism and military virtues, glorifies national ideals, purity in public life, loyalty in religion -- the chief tasks which Augustus had taken upon himself to accomplish. These are only a few examples of the "official view" which Horace developed, and his association with the Emperor by this time prompted him to make such remarks as "principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est"[1] ("To have won favor with the foremost men is not the lowest glory"). But his willingness to write for the new regime is attested by the fact that he was chosen by Augustus to write the Carmen Saeculare. Peace and prosperity had marked the first ten years of Augustus' reign (27-17 B.C.), and to celebrate the new era the Emperor decided to revive the secular festivals.[2] The inscription which recorded this festival was discovered in Rome, September 1890,[3] and its inscribed words, Carmen composuit Q. Hor(at)ius Flaccus made Horace the poet laureate of the Empire. This, his most notable official act, was the grand finale for the occasion since it was sung on the

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[1]Horace Epist. 1.17.35.

[2]Literally these were century games because they were given only at long intervals. Three days were devoted to ceremonies, contests, and spectacles which celebrated the return to Saturn's Golden Age. Cf. Will Durant, Caesar and Christ, A History of Roman Civilization and of Christianity from their Beginnings to A.D. 325, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944), p. 225.

[3]Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, op. cit., p. 469.

the third and last day of the festival by a choir of twenty-seven boys and twenty-seven girls before the temple of Apollo on the Palatine. Horace was proud of the recognition which had come to him, and he refers to the reputation he gained from this work.[1] Two additional odes which celebrated the glories of Augustus in laudatory terms were composed in honor of victories won by Tiberius and Drusus.[2] Their campaign put an end to the incursions of wild and hostile tribes on the northern border of Italy.[3] They were the step-sons of Augustus, and in praising their remarkable military capacities in reality Horace praised the Emperor. In general, Horace is proud that he can say, "Me primis urbis belli placuisse domique"[4] ("I found favor, both in war and peace, with the foremost in the State."), and the recurrence of such statements offers evidence that Horace had completely succumbed to the ideals of the ruling power.

In like fashion Ben Jonson ascended from lesser patrons to a royal one who awarded him the pension of a laureate. The "wisest fool in Christendom" was well known for his love of learning and love of classical allusions, and Jonson, whose classicism was the wonder and oftentimes the

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[1]Horace Carm. iv.6.29-30, 41-44; iv.3. 17-24.

[2]Horace Carm. iv.4; iv.14.

[3]Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Ad Carm. iv.4

[4]Horace, Epist. 1.20.23.

despair of his fellow Londoners, was the natural choice when James I demanded an entertainment on passing to his coronation. But his reaction to royal recognition was characteristically Jonsonian. In A Panegyre on the Happy Entrance of James our Sovereign he might have written sweet phrases and unreservedly paid tribute to His Majesty, but he preferred to point out that kings are heavenly in their office but men in their persons; that there have been many bad kings in the past; and finally, that kings can do more by good example than by tyranny.[1] In all, these remarks to the king were more like exhortations to virtue and humility than a celebration of divine right. But very close to adulation is the first epigram he wrote to King James:

> How, best of Kings, do'st thou a sceptre beare!
> How, best of Poets, do'st thou laurell weare!
> But two things, rare, the Fates had in their store,
> And gaue thee both, to shew they could no more.
> For such a Poet, while thy dayes were greene,
> Thou wert, as chiefe of them are said t'haue beene.
> And such a Prince thou art, wee daily see,
> As chiefe of those still promise they will bee.
> Whom should my muse then flie to, but the best
> Of Kings for grace; of Poets, for my test?[2]

The two remaining epigrams to his sovereign are formal and devoid of any deliberate art to impress the king.[3] Yet Jonson was on familiar terms with the King and dared to tell

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[1]Cf. Horace Carm. iii. 1.5 ff. 4. 37 ff. 65 ff.

[2]Ben Jonson, Epigrams i and iv.

[3]Ibid., viii, xxxv, and li.

him he had a bad habit of singing his verses,[1] and upon his return from Scotland in 1619, he wrote to Drummond that the King was glad to see him back in England. Yet the death of his patron was a disaster for Ben because, unlike Maecenas who on his deathbed had implored Augustus: "Horati Flacci ut mei esto memor"[2] ("Be as mindful of Horatius Flaccus as of me"), King James had left no provision for Ben. Charles his successor was never intimate with Jonson, and the epigrams written to Charles are indications of the poverty which faced the poet in his last days. The eighty-second epigram is inscribed "To the great and good King Charles, by his Majesty's most humble and thankful servant, Ben Jonson".[3] This was a far cry from the usual signature of Ben, who in his address to the Court had signed his name after these words: "Thy servant, but not slaue".[4]

In addition to such famous patrons both Horace and Jonson had others to whom they left last eulogies. Maecenas' affection for Horace is indicated in his epigram which Suetonius quotes:

> Ni te visceribus meis, Horati,
> Pius iam diligo, tu tuum sodalem
> Ninnio videas strigosiorem;....[5]

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[1]William Drummond, op. cit., p. 23.

[2]Suetonius, op. cit., II, 484

[3]Ben Jonson, Underwood, "An Epigram to Our Great and Good King Charles, On His Anniversary Day, 1629", lxxxii.

[4]Ben Jonson, Cynthia's Revels, The Court, line 24.

[5]Suetonius, op. cit., ii, 485. Ninnius is unknown but must have been notorious for his leanness.

("If I do not love you, my dear Horace, more than life itself, behold your comrade leaner than Ninnius").

Horace's concern for Maecenas when he was about to go with Augustus to Actium is one of his tributes to their friendship. Horace fears for the safety of Maecenas and though unfit for war himself says he will accompany his friend regardless of the danger.[1] He says in part:

> Quid nos, quibus te vita si superstite
> Iucunda, si contra, gravis?[2]

("But what of us, to whom, with thee surviving, life is a delight, but else is full of heaviness?")

This is real praise because no hope of gain impels him to flatter Maecenas whose beneficence has already enriched him "enough and more."[3]

Somewhat comparable to Maecenas in the life of Ben Jonson is Lord d'Aubigny. One of Ben's most sincere epigrams was written to him. Greatly indebted to him, Ben wrote a poem of gratitude which speaks for itself in comparing his attitude toward this patron with that of Horace toward Maecenas:

> Is there a hope that Man would thankefull bee,
> If I should faile in gratitude to thee,
> To whom I am so bound, lou'd Avbigny?
> No, I doe therefore, call Posteritie
> Into the debt; and reckon on her head,
> How full of want, how swallowed vp, how dead
> I and this Muse had beene, if thou hadst not

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[1]Whether Horace meant this literally or not is questionable. See Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Ad Ep. 1

[2]Horace Ep. 1. 5-6.

[3]Ibid., 1. 31-32.

> Lent timely succours, and new life begot:
> So , all reward, or name, that growes to mee
> By her attempt, shall still be owing thee.
> And, than this same, I know no abler way
> To thanke thy benefits: which is, to pay.[1]

Such are the influences which molded the form for the literary output of Horace and Ben Jonson. Their education, their environment, and particularly their friendship with patrons influenced the kind of writing each did. All of these combined to bequeath to future ages poetry and drama which is accessible to all interested in the classics, whether Latin, or English kindled by the Horatian flame.

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[1]Ben Jonson, Underwood, "To Esme, Lord d'Aubigny," cxxvii.

CHAPTER II

RELATIONS OF HORACE AND JONSON WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS

Neither the writings of Horace nor those of Ben Jonson openly discuss the political questions of their times. Both were more interested in the moral aspects of the lives of the people and though the political ages of both were very important, neither one states specifically any view which could be construed as his own personal and sincere opinion. Horace, living at a time when Roman government was intermittently in the hands of ambitious patriots who came forward to champion the rights of the poor or under proud nobles who were fighting to preserve traditions, was forced by circumstances he chose for himself to write about the reforms of Augustus as well as to praise the Emperor himself. As for Jonson, he held aloof from political issues, which is quite understandable since he had known no other government but a monarchy.

When Horace came with his father to Rome, the city was a comparatively quiet place with government under the control of Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Caesar. Events moved fast, and by the time he was about twelve years old Caesar had invaded Gaul, and Crassus had been killed by the

Parthians (53 B.C.). Pompey at the head of the senatorial party sent Caesar an ultimatum which the latter answered by crossing the Rubicon.[1] By the time Horace was seventeen, Pompey was defeated by Caesar and --

> cuncta terrarum subacta
> Praeter atrocem animum Catonis.[2]
>
> ("All the world subdued, except stubborn Cato's soul").

Reared upon the proud tradition that went with saying Civis Romanus sum ("I am a Roman citizen"), Horace was by nature and environment against Caesar, and when the tremendous news of his death reached Athens, Horace and other young Roman students such as Marcus Tullius Cicero, Messala, Bibulus, and Varius must have hailed it joyfully. When Brutus arrived in Athens new adherents to his cause were found in these young students. Horace mentions that Brutus appointed him tribune,[3] and in what is considered one of his earliest satires, supposedly written before the battle of Philippi, he again refers to Brutus.[4] This satire is an account of a battle of wit between Persius, the half-Greek, half-Roman merchant of Clazomenae, and Rupilius Rex of

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[1]J.Wight Duff, A Literary History of Rome, (5th ed.; London: J.Fisher Unwin, 1928), p. 404. Henry Dwight Sedgwick, Horace, A Biography, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1947), p. 13.

[2]Horace Carm. ii. 1. 23-24

[3]Horace Serm. 1. 6. 42-48. Cf. Suetonius, op. cit., II, 484.

[4]Cf. Morris, Ad Serm. 1. 7

Praeneste, a man who had been an adherent of Pompey's party and Praetor at the time of Caesar's death. The latter, now proscribed by Antony and Octavius,[1] had taken refuge with Brutus. The main point of the story is Persius' pun on the name Rex which he links up with Brutus and his ancestors:

> per magnos, Brute, deos te
> Oro, qui reges consueris tollere, cur non
> Hunc Regem iugulas? Operum hoc, mihi crede,
> Tuorum est.[2]

("By the great gods, I implore you, O Brutus, since it is in your line to take off 'kings', why not behead this Rex? This, believe me, is a task meet for you.")

To Horace too, Brutus was a liberator as were his ancestors who had driven out the Tarquins.[3] In addition to this there is only one other reference to his association with Brutus. After Antony, Lepidus and Octavius had formed a triumvirate and their combined forces met at Philippi, the cause of Brutus was lost. Horace tells how he retreated (non bene),[4] unable to imitate the heroism of his leader. The hero of his "fiery youth"[5] had died the "noble death" of Cato, and the disaster at Philippi,[6] which left him poverty-stricken, did not increase his Republican sympathies.

Back in Rome, Horace wrote the earliest of his

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[1]Cf. Morris, Ad Serm. 1. 8.

[2]Horace Serm. 1. 7. 33-36.

[3]Morris, Ad Serm. 1. 8.

[4]Horace Carm. ii. 7. 10.

[5]Horace Carm. iii. 14. 27.

[6]Horace Epist. ii. 2. 49.

satires[1] but in none of these, other than the ones cited, does he mention any incidents concerned with his early republicanism. The kind of writing he engaged in aroused the enmity of many[2] but indirectly brought him to the notice of Maecenas. The latter was a statesman upon whose wisdom and help Octavius depended in changing a chaotic Republic to a smooth-running Principate. Along with Agrippa, Maecenas and Octavius had decided upon a government whose supreme power was restricted to a few but one which combined a monarchial form based upon an army, an aristocratic form springing from heredity, and a democratic form depending on the wealth of the business class. The people, no longer dreaming of freedom and hoping for security and order, accepted the solution philosophically.[3] To popularize the ideas and reforms of the new regime no man was more suitable for the office of propaganda minister than Maecenas himself since he was interested in the fine arts. Horace refers to Maecenas' writing in these words:

> tuque pedestribus
> Dices historiis proelia Caesaris,
> Maecenas, melius ductaque per vias
> Regum colla minacium.[4]

("So you, yourself, Maecenas, would better treat, and treat in storied prose, of Caesar's battles and of kings, once threatening, led by the neck along the streets.")

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[1]Horace Serm. 1. 2, 4, 7, 8. Cf. Morris, Ad Serm. 1. 4.

[2]Horace Serm. 1. 2, 4, 8.

[3]Will Durant, op. cit., p. 212.

[4]Horace Carm. ii. 12. 9-12.

Friendship with Maecenas was undoubtedly the greatest determining factor in the kind of writing Horace was to do. When he returned from Philippi he probably was as amenable to changing his opinions concerning his Republican ideas as young men in all ages are who have espoused a cause which they have thought right and found wanting. Maecenas was unquestionably convinced that one-man rule was needed and wished to help his country materially, intellectually, and morally. That he was held in high respect by the citizens of Rome is known from Horace's reference to the applause which greeted Maecenas in the theatre.[1] Horace himself refers to Maecenas as the partem animae[2] ("half of my life"). Under the influence of this man who believed the Republican system was outworn and that imperial government should take its place, Horace's writings take on a new tone. He had evidently acquiesced for the sake of comfort and safety. The first satire written after Horace had been admitted into the circle of Maecenas' friends[3] is quite different in tone from his previous ones.[4] Here the reader is introduced to the kindly and gentle Horace speaking upon mutual forbearance -- a far cry from the invectiveness, the coarseness, and the cynicism of the earlier satires. Perhaps the change in his

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[1]Horace Carm. 1. 20. 3-8

[2]Ibid., ii. 17. 5.

[3]Horace Serm. 1. 3.

[4]Horace Serm. 1. 2, 7, and 8; Ep. 4. 5. 9. 10. 12. 17

worldly status and the prospects of a future to be spent in writing rather than in a clerk's office account for the changed tone. His conformity to the customs and politics of the day is attested in the pro-imperial stand he took after his introduction to Maecenas. From this time on, no rebellion against the wishes of the ruling class can be found. As time progressed he openly favored the efforts of the administration and worked for them. Poets of Horace's time were either time-servers or had ideals which differed from those of Octavius and his few advisers. To the first group Horace must be assigned since his conformity to official pressure is so evident.[1] Yet, though Horace acquiesced in the tyrannical demands for contributions to the official program of emperor-glorification, Maecenas did not regard him merely as a tool of the state since his dying words indicate that Horace was his dearest friend.[2]

Neither political gossip nor Horace's own personal reaction to policies of government are revealed in his work. He had learned to praise the government or to keep silent about it. As early as 38 B.C.[3] he went to Brundisium in the company of Maecenas and two other ambassadors who were to confer with Antony whose help Caesar needed against the forces of Sextus Pompeius. Though this conference was most

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[1]Horace Carm. 1. 2; iii. 3, 5.

[2]Suetonius, op. cit., II, 464.

[3]Cf. Morris Ad. Carm. 1. 5

important politically, Horace by-passes the real issue, devoting only three lines to the purpose of the journey:

> Huc venturus erat Maecenas optimus atque
> Cocceius, missi magnis de rebus uterque
> Legati, aversos soliti componere amicos.[1]

("Here, Maecenas was to meet us, and noble Cocceius, envoys both on business of import, and old hands at settling feuds between friends.")

Actually the satire is a recital of events of the journey and a delightful picture of the personal relations of the author with his friends Maecenas, Vergil, Varius and Plotius Tucca. These were safe topics and ones which Horace could write upon without endangering his own position.

Still another instance which proves that Horace was avoiding political issues occurs when he recalls that he was stopped by people on the streets of Rome and questioned about the affairs of the day:

> Frigidus a rostris manat per compita rumor:
> Quicumque obvius est me consulit: "O bone, nam te
> Scire, deos quoniam propius contingis, oportet,
> Numquid de Dacis audisti?" "Nil equidem." "Ut tu
> Semper eris derisor!" "At omnes di exagitent me,
> Si quicquam." "Quid? militibus promissa Triquetra
> Praedia Caesar, an est Italis tellure daturus?"
> Iurantem me scire nihil mirantur ut unum
> Scilicet egregii mortalem altique silenti.[2]

("Does a chilly rumor run from the Rostra through the streets? Whoever comes my way asks my opinion: 'My good sir, you must know -- you come so much closer to the gods: you haven't heard any news about the Dacians, have you?' 'None whatever.' 'How you will always mock at us!' 'But heaven confound me if I have heard a word!' 'Well, is it in the three-cornered isle, or on Italian soil, that

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[1]Horace Serm. i. 5. 27-29.

[2]Horace Serm. ii. 6. 50-58

Caesar means to give the soldiers their promised lands?' When I swear I know nothing, they marvel at me as, forsooth, the man of all men remarkably and profoundly reticent.")

At this time the Dacians were wavering between Octavian and Antony, and Crassus was sent against them in 30 B.C. The assignment of lands was the reward promised to veterans of Actium. Both questions had undoubtedly been discussed in Maecenas' circle of friends but Horace declined to commit himself publicly.

After Actium many men went along with the times and ended by surrendering their intellectual independence even though they had been distrustful or hostile to the new form of government. When word came that Cleopatra had committed suicide, Horace wrote in this song of triumph:

> Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
> Pulsanda tellus, nunc Saliaribus
> Ornare pulvinar deorum
> Tempus erat dapibus, sodales.[1]

("Now is the time to drain the flowing bowl, now with unfettered foot to beat the ground with dancing, now with Salian feast to deck the couches of the gods, my comrades!")

His admittance to the house on the Esquiline[2] had erased any vestige of Republican ideas Horace ever had. Here undoubtedly his sympathy for the imperial policy was cultivated. Hitherto he had been a struggling poet earning a pittance in an unimportant office but now, by changing his political

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[1]Horace Carm. 1. 37. 1-4.

[2]The home of Maecenas.

creed which was perhaps weak at its best, he found himself able to live in comparative ease and to devote himself to his muse. The ideals of Brutus which had inflamed his youthful patriotism had by now given way to ideas of personal advancement which Horace evidently hoped to secure through closer relationship with the Princeps. Thus he paved the way for the realization of his own aims in the satire he wrote immediately following the capture of Alexandria.[1] In this he refers to Caesar as *invictus* (unvanquished), and contemplates praising his ruler in his poetry. He says:

> nisi dextro tempore, Flacci
> Verba per attentam non ibunt Caesaris aurem[2]

("Only at an auspicious moment will the words of a Flaccus find with Caesar entrance to an attentive ear.")

In this playful piece there is a serious anxiety beneath the jest upon *mala et bona carmina* ("good and bad verses"). The lines are addressed to Trebatius, a famous lawyer of Cicero's time, and Horace was anxious to secure his legal advice. In the Augustan Age freedom of speech was restricted by law, and therefore Horace had to be especially careful that no libelous remarks came from his pen. At a later period, probably after the publication of the three books of the

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[1]Horace *Serm.* ii. 1. Cf. W.Y. Sellar, *op. cit.*, p. 28; Morris, *Ad. Serm.* II. 1; Horace *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough ("Loeb Classical Library;" Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1947), *Ad. Serm.* ii. 1.

[2]Horace *Serm.* ii. 1. 18-19.

Odes[1] he enjoyed the favor of Augustus, but in the meantime life had become easier for him, and following the lines of least resistance, he apparently preferred ease and acceptance of dictatorship to fighting for political right.

Official pressure coupled with a desire for recognition caused Horace to write the odes which are so flattering to the Princeps. In the second ode of the first book, written before the title of "Augustus" had been conferred upon Octavius[2], Horace refers to him as pater atque princeps. In this Horace laments the signs of the times and fears a return to civil wars. He begs the gods to prevent the ruin of the state and suggests that Mercury had assumed the guise of Octavius who he hopes will remain with the Romans for a long time, enjoying the triumphs due him for his victories at Dalmatia, Actium, and Alexandria. This deification of the Princeps is sheer adulation on Horace's part. Again in a prayer to Jupiter he places Augustus second only to the "Father and Guardian of the human race"[3]

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[1] W.Y. Sellar, op. cit., p. 28.

[2] According to Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Horace Odes and Epodes, p. 145, the allusion in line 49 is to triumphs celebrated in August B.C. 29; Octavius was princeps Senatus from B.C. 28 to his death. Evidence points to the date between his return from the east, B.C. 29, and renewal of imperium in January 27, and most probably to the latter part of B.C. 28 when Octavius talked of laying aside his authority. The title of Augustus was conferred in 27 B.C. Cf. J.Wight Duff, The Writers of Rome, (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 49.

[3] Horace Carm. 1. 12. 49-52.

and even assigns him a place in the starry citadels, sipping nectar with the gods.[1] Another ode[2] welcomes Augustus, returning in B.C. 24 from the West where he had been engaged in subduing the Cantabrians.[3] Finally, he sets the name and fame of Caesar among the stars.[4] In so many instances such as these Horace tends more toward emperor glorification than to sincere praises of the success of Augustus, so that one concludes that some of these selections were written under pressure. Suetonius seems to substantiate this in saying that Augustus "eumque coegerit propter hoc tribus carminum libris ex longo intervallo quartum addere"[5] ("compelled him to add a fourth to his three books of lyrics after a long silence"), and that Augustus, piqued because no mention had been made of him in several sermones he had read "forced" from Horace the selection which begins with these words:

> Cum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus
> Res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,
> Legibus emendes, in publica commoda peccem,
> Si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Caesar. [6]

("Seeing that single-handed thou dost bear the burden of tasks so many and so great, protecting Italy's

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[1]Horace Carm. iii. 3. 11-12.

[2]Ibid., iii. 14.

[3]Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Ad. Carm. iii. 14

[4]Horace Carm. iii. 14. 1.

[5]Suetonius, op. cit., II, 487-488

[6]Horace Epist. ii. 1. 1-4.

realm with arms, providing it with morals, reforming it by laws, I should sin against the public weal, Caesar, if I wasted thy time with long discourse").

Thus in the capacity of "laureate of the Roman Empire" Horace wrote the odes of Book IV. In one of these Horace, addressing Augustus who has spent three years in the West,[1] tells him that his people yearn for him as a mother yearns for an absent son. For, Horace says, when Augustus is there --

> Tutus bos etenim rura perambulat,
> Nutrit rura Ceres almaque Faustitas,
> Pacatum volitant per mare navitae:
> Culpari metuit fides.
>
> Nullis polluitur casta domus stupris,
> Mos et lex maculosum edomuit nefas,
> Laudantur simili prole puerperae,
> Culpam poena premit comes.
>
> Quis Parthum paveat, quis gelidum Scythen,
> Quis Germania quos horrida parturit
> Fetus, incolumi Caesare? [2]

("The ox in safety roams the pastures; Ceres and benign Prosperity make rich the crops; safe are the seas o'er which our sailors course; Faith shrinks from blame; polluted by no stain, the home is pure; custom and law have stamped out the taint of sin; mothers win praise because of children like unto their sires; while Vengeance follows close on guilt. Who would fear the Parthian, who the icy Scythian, who the hordes rough Germany doth breed, while Caesar lives unharmed?").

By the time he wrote this ode (16 B.C.)[3] he had completely followed the trend of the times: early opposition, gradual

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[1] Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Ad. Carm. iv. 5.

[2] Horace Carm. iv. 5. 17-28.

[3] Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Ad. Carm. iv. 5.

conformity, and final surrender. These lyrics of Horace are the outgrowths of a guarantee of his own personal security rather than his public spirit or patriotic instincts, and the opportunism in his acceptance of emperor-worship is evident in his complete capitulation to the new order of Augustus.

In the same way, the period of history in which Jonson lived was a very trying one. It was marked by a revival of letters, the study of the ancient classics, the rise of the middle class, the colonization of America, and the Reformation. Individual enterprise was at its height under Elizabeth because her own ambitions[1] -- to carry on a war with Spain and one with Ireland, to assist the Protestants of France and Holland, to inaugurate great schemes for American colonization, to fit out expeditions to harass the colonies, and to plunder the commerce of Spain -- compelled her to allow her subjects much freedom. Yet thought had its boundaries in this era too, and political affairs were very complicated. Statesmen, by the necessities of their position, were compelled to be compromising in their measures, and everyone under Elizabeth was forced to be wary, vigilant, politic and crafty. "Loyalty of heart and largeness of brain"[2] were two requisites in serving this despotic queen.

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[1] Edwin T. Whipple, Literature of the Age of Elizabeth (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1899), pp. 6-7.

[2] Ibid.

As in Horace's time, it was found easier to drift along in the stream of events than to oppose such a strong current as existed in Jonson's Britain.

Such were the conditions in England when Ben was writing and this was the only type of government he was to know. The stormier days of Mary were merely a legend to Jonson, and his only reference to that period in history is his allusion to his father who was imprisoned by the Queen of Scots because of reform doctrines he had adopted during the reign of Edward.[1] Under James conditions were much the same, and in his last days Ben could observe the decline that was to come during the reign of Charles. Ben's London was already a great city and the center of European commerce, and government in England had already reached its "Augustan Age" when Ben began to write. Therefore he was never forced to make the decision Horace had to make in reference to the attitude he expressed in writing about his rulers and their government.

Yet Jonson was not a conformist as is proved by his many entanglements with the law, as well as his outspoken comments and unsolicited advice to the dignitaries of his age. His troubles with the government began early, and for the part he took in finishing Thomas Nashe's satiric comedy, The Isle of Dogs, he spent some time in the Marshalsea prison.[2] This play Jonson had been employed to finish when

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[1] C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, (ed.), op. cit., I. 2.

[2] Ibid., p. 15.

Nashe fled to Norfolk, leaving his play incomplete. After its performance in the theatre, a charge was brought before the Privy Council of "a lewd plaie that was plaied in one of the plaie howses on the Bancke Side, contanynge very seditious and sclandrous matter."[1] As a result Jonson, along with Gabriel Spencer and Robert Shaa were imprisoned. This was Jonson's first encounter with the law and the beginning of a series of troubles with the government. His quarrel with Gabriel Spencer, which ended in the death of the actor, brought him close to the gallows but he escaped by claiming right of clergy.[2] While in prison however, he added to the suspicion of the authorities by adopting the Catholic faith, and this in itself brought him under closer surveillance of the law. As he related later to William Drummond, spies were set to catch him, but he was put on his guard by the "keeper," to whose friendly warning he probably owed his life.[3] Thus Jonson left the prison without surrendering either his life or his liberty. He also came into contact with the law and alienated himself from his friends by his "Works." John Marston, who had been one of Jonson's closest friends, unwittingly made his Chrysoganus in the revised Histriomastix resemble Jonson,[4] and since the latter

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[1] C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, (ed.), op. cit., I, 15.

[2] Ibid., p. 19.

[3] William Drummond, op. cit., p. 12.

[4] C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, (ed.), op. cit., I, 25.

could brook no ridicule of any kind, the result was Cynthia's Revels in which Marston and Thomas Dekker found themselves ludicrously imitated in the characters of Hedon and Anaides. This was the beginning of the Poetomachia, or poets' war, which lasted for the next two years. In the Poetaster Jonson presented himself as the good poet and thereby caused much public resentment which added to the number of his enemies.[1] His Apologetical Dialogue, in which he uttered his last words on the poets' war, was suppressed by authority.[2] It was an unrepentant apology for the libelous remarks his contemporaries found in his play.

Yet even more serious trouble with authority lay in store for Jonson. He was called before the Council and accused by the Earl of Northampton of "popery and treason" in the play Sejanus.[3] Some satirical implications were probably seen in this play, and possibilities of the charge of treason might be found in the fact that the play had a traitor for its hero. Passages cut from the original version may have contained speeches on which were based such charges but the actual issue of this summons is not known.[4] Jonson's Catholicism too might have served as

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[1] Palmer, op. cit., p. 60.

[2] C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, op. cit., I, 89.

[3] Ibid., p. 37.

[4] Ibid.

a pretext for the accusation, though he himself believed Northampton to have had personal reasons.[1] The outcome of this charge was not related by Jonson as certainly Drummond would have recorded it if it had been told to him.

Another misadventure of Jonson's was his part in writing Eastward Ho. John Marston and George Chapman[2] had written this comedy of london life, and in it were included a number of topical allusions to the hungry Scots who had come flocking to London in the King's train. In some way Jonson had contributed, and when the play was printed (1605) Sir James Murray called for retribution.[3] Because of this Jonson and his two collaborators spent some time in prison and the report was "that they should then had their ears cutt and noses."[4] However, Jonson's friends, particularly Robert, Earl of Salisbury, came to his help and again he was released. So for the English bard there were many years of friction with authorities but always fate or friends intervened and brought an unexpected release. His was not the deliberate purpose of avoiding entanglements with the government as Horace's seems to have been, and perhaps it was his unhappy faculty for saying the right thing at the wrong time which brought Jonson into trouble so often.

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[1]William Drummond, op. cit., p. 14.

[2]Palmer, op. cit., p. 85

[3]William Drummond, op. cit., p. 12.

[4]Ibid.

For the most part, Horace strode the middle path and never had the courage to express himself freely as Jonson did. The former had been "reconstructed" as the latter never needed to be. Self-preservation was evidently uppermost in Horace's mind, and he was careful to avoid any derogatory remark or even one which might be interpreted as such. Jonson could have avoided some of his encounters with the law, but he was endowed, happily or otherwise, with a spirit which asserted itself in a way which is more easily understood in our day than the fawning obeisance of Horace.

There is far less flattery in Jonson's Works than in Horace's. The British poet rarely pleased any man's vanity. Perhaps Drummond's observation that "He never esteemed a man for the name of a Lord"[1] sums up Jonson's attitude in general toward others. His comments upon Elizabeth[2] are the antithesis of anything Horace ever wrote about the house of the Julii. But in some instances his attitude toward James is comparable to Horace's ingratiating attitude toward Augustus. The King had a genuine love of learning, and he approved of erudite gatherings such as that of the Antiquarian Society[3] to which Camden, Cotton, Carew, Bacon and Jonson belonged -- a gathering which recalls

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[1]William Drummond, op. cit., p. 15.

[2]Ibid.

[3]C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, op. cit., I, 35.

the group in Rome made up of Maecenas, Vergil, Varius, and Horace. But like Ovid[1] and Gallus[2] in Augustan times, there were people like Selden who "misused their learning to support truth against royal opinion,"[3] and found that James was not the friend of those who spoke against his regime. Selden was summoned to appear before the High Commission Court at Lambeth Palace because of his book entitled The History of Tithes. This book was suppressed by the High Court after Selden gave a written acknowledgment of his blame for having published his book which he said incurred "both his Majesties and your Lordships displeasure."[4]

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[1]Ovid was banished to Tomis. The real reason was not the immorality of Ars Amatoria but something which could not be made known. There remained something which closely affected the Emperor's private life. Licentiousness of Julia was the worst of hindrances to Augustus' attempts to reform public morals. Probably Ovid was employed by her in an intrigue which was detected by Augustus. Cf. H.J. Rose, op. cit., pp. 325-326.

[2]Gallus was a soldier and poet who "owing to unguarded speech when prefect of Egypt had the misfortune to forfeit the favour of Augustus. He committed suicide." Cf. J.Wight Duff, The Writers of Rome, p. 68.

[3]C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, op. cit., I, 35.

[4]John Selden, "Table Talk", Chronicle of some of the principle events in the Life, Works and Times of John Selden. (London: Alex Murray and Son, 1869), pp. 5-6.

Like Livy[1] and Pollio[2] in the Augustan Age, Ben Jonson managed to remain in the good graces of James by being silent about the political issues of the day, but he is more akin to Horace in his remarks in the Part of the Kings Entertainment in passing to his Coronation:

> I tender thee the heartiest welcome, yet
> That euer king had to his empires seate:
> Neuer came man, more long'd for, more desir'd
> And being come, more reuerene'd, lou'd, admir'd.[3]

He even approaches Horace in setting Augustus next to Jupiter when he attributes to James a heavenly quality by saying to him:

> With like deuotions doe I stoope t'embrace
> This springing glory of thy godlike race.[4]

Continuing, he describes James as "His countries wonder, hope, loue, ioy, and pride."[5] In this same celebration

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[1]Livy: "Imperial embargo on the publication of proceedings in the senate limited the material for contemporary records. The desire to avoid ruffling susceptibilities was largely accountable for choice of subjects, remote in time and locality which characterizes Fenestella, Arruntius, Trogus and Livy himself." J.W. Duff, A Literary History of Rome, p. 635

[2]Pollio: The new regime had deprived him of a career in the state as an orator. He compensated himself for loss of a statesman's influence by drawing around himself a coterie of authors, and in trenchant literary criticism found vent for an outspokenness no longer permissible in politics. He closed his History of the Civil Wars with Philippi, in discreet wisdom of Horace's warning that, in such a task of risk and hazard, his march lay "across fires smouldering neath treacherous cinder-crust" (Carm. ii. 1. 7.). Cf. J.W. Duff, A Literary History of Rome, pp. 612-613.

[3]Ben Jonson, Part of the Kings Entertainment in passing to his Coronation, lines 334-337.

[4]Ibid., lines 340-341; Cf. Horace, Carm. i. 12. 51-52; iii. 5. 2-4.

[5]Ibid., line 342.

there was a large frieze on which Jonson quoted two lines from Horace:

> Jurandasque tuum per nomen ponimus aras,
> Nil oriturum alias, nil ortum tale fatentes.[1]
>
> ("We set up altars to swear by in your name, and confess that nought like you will hereafter arise or has arisen ere now.")

These few examples show that Ben, too, allowed himself to flatter James, but perhaps he was more excusable for this than Horace because the fashion was long-standing in England, new in Rome.

Often in flattering passages however, Jonson and Horace appended some exhortation to their praise. In A Panegyre on the Happy Entrance of James, Our Sovereign, after depicting James coming into the state attended by Themis (tradition), Dice (justice), Eunomia (good law), and Irene (peace), then recounting the joy of the populace at his entrance, Ben allows Themis to advise the King:

> that Kings
> Are here on earth the most conspicuous things:
> That they by Heau'n are plac'd vpon his throne,
> To rule like Heau'n; and haue no more, their owne,
> As they are men, than men.[2]

Again she says:

> That princes, since they know it is their fate
> Oft-times to haue the secrets of their state

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[1]Ben Jonson, Part of the Kings Entertainment in passing to his Coronation, lines 426-427. Cf. Horace Epist. II. I. 16-17.

[2]Ben Jonson, A Panegyre on the Happy Entrance of James, Our Sovereign, lines 77-81.

Betraid to fame, should take more care, and feare
In publique acts what face and form they beare. [1]

Perhaps the closest Horace comes to this is in these lines:

Sed Timor et Minae
Scandunt eodem quo dominus, neque
Decedit aerata triremi et
Post equitem sedet atra Cura.[2]

("But Fear and Threats climb to the self-same spot the owner does; nor does black Care quit the brass-bound galley and even takes her seat behind the horseman.")

To James, Jonson attributes such thoughts as these:

He knew, that those, who would with loue, command,
Must with a tender (yet a steadfast) hand
Sustaine the reynes, and in the checke forbeare
To offer cause of iniurie, or feare;
That kings, by their example, more doe obay
When they are led, then when they are compell'd.
In all these knowing artes our prince excelled. [3]

This was the suggestive way the English poet had of giving advice to the new sovereign, and perhaps Horace approaches such advice in saying:

Vis consili expers mole ruit sua;
Vim temperatam di quoque provehunt
In maius; idem odere vires
Omne nefas animo moventes.[4]

("Brute force bereft of wisdom falls to ruin by its own weight. Power with counsel tempered, even the gods make greater. But might that in its soul is bent on all impiety, they hate.")

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[1]Ben Jonson, A Panegyre on the Happy Entrance of James, Our Soversign, lines 85-88.

[2]Horace Carm. iii. 1. 37-40.

[3]Ben Jonson, A Panegyre on the Happy Entrance of James Our Soversign, lines 156-162.

[4]Horace Carm. iii. 4. 65-68.

His reference to "power" may be a veiled hint to Augustus, but the ode is not one specifically addressed to the Emperor. Both Jonson and Horace write declarations of loyalty to their sovereigns too. Jonson addresses King James thus:

> Neuer had land more reason to reioyce,
> Nor to her blisse could ought now added bee,
> Saue, that shee might the same perpetuall see.
> Which when time, nature, and the fates deny'd,
> With a twice louder shoute againe they cry'd,
> 'Yet, let blest Brittaine aske, (without your wrong,)
> Still to haue such a king, and this king long.[1]

Parallel to this are Horace's words to Augustus when the latter affected to talk of laying down his authority:[2]

> Serus in caelum redeas, diuque
> Laetus intersis populo Quirini,
> Neve te nostris vitiis iniquum
> Ocior aura
> Tollat; .... [3]

("Late mayest thou return to the skies and long mayest thou be pleased to dwell amid Quirinus' folk; and may no untimely gale waft thee from us angered at our sins.")

So Horace and Ben Jonson, living in ages far-removed from each other, viewed their respective governments in a somewhat similar way. Neither one wrote upon political issues which were of prime importance at the time, and neither one recorded any personal views upon the policies of the rulers. In the course of events at Rome, Horace chose

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[1]Ben Jonson, A Panegyre on the Happy Entrance of James Our Soveraign, lines 156-162.

[2]Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, Ad. Carm. 1. 2

[3]Horace Carm. 1. 2. 45-49.

To conform to the new regime, but some instances connected with his "reconstruction" would find no parallel in Jonson. The latter was not given to such kowtowing, as his many encounters with the law prove. Horace praised Augustus, most often to extremes; Jonson praised James in the same way, but did not extend such flattery to Elizabeth or Charles. Both mixed judicious advice with their praise, but Jonson openly directed his advice to King James whereas Horace wrapped his in aphorisms which were applicable to all men of power. Essentially, then, each made use of the aurea mediocritas recommended by Horace himself, and wrote nothing which revealed any debatable issue of the times in which each lived.

CHAPTER III

SATIRE AS A MIRROR FOR THE TIMES OF HORACE AND JONSON

Although neither Horace nor Jonson wrote directly about the condition of state affairs, yet both wrote about types of individuals who were living around them, and satire was the means they used to clarify these types. Many definitions of the term satire have been devised since its innovation in Roman literature, and in addition to variety of meaning it is now used as a literary device in prose and dramatic works and no longer confined to its original form of hexameter line. Originally the word "satire" came from the Latin word *satura* which meant a dish of various fruits annually offered to the gods (*lanx satura*), and from this evolved the idea of a mixture.[1] As a species of poetry peculiar to the Romans, it first received a regular poetic form from Ennius. Later the word was used to describe the miscellaneous entertainments given by strolling players who amused their audiences by remarks directed toward prominent

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[1] *Harper's Latin Dictionary*, ed. E.A. Andrews, rev. Charles T. Lewis and Charles Short (New York: Harper Brothers, 1894). The etymology of the word "satire" is debatable, however.

men, unpopular institutions, or open scandals.[1] Lucilius, writing about 132 B.C.,[2] followed the Old Comedy of Greece as represented by Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes in attacking the infamous.[3] Fragments of his early Roman satire have the characteristic form of hexameter verse. But the earliest occurrence[4] of the word satura in an extant text is found in Horace who says: "Sunt quibus in satura videar nimis acer[5]" ("There are some critics who think I am too savage in my satire"), and throughout his works the word occurs only twice.[6] This is probably due to the fact that Roman writers did not ordinarily designate their works or refer to other works by literary terms.[7]

Though the definition of satire has varied, yet the motives which prompted its early use are the same.[8] The follies or vices of the times were the subjects upon which the writers of satire bent their efforts, and the

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[1]Gilbert Cannan, Satire, Vol. I The Art and Craft of Letters (London: Martin Secker, n.d.), p. 24.

[2]J.W. Duff, Roman Satire: Its Outlook on Social Life (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1936), p. 44.

[3]Ibid., p. 62.

[4]Ibid., p. 15.

[5]Horace Serm. ii. 1. 1.

[6]Ibid. ii. 1. 1.; ii. 6. 17.

[7]J.W. Duff, Roman Satire: Its Outlook on Social Life, p. 15

[8]Cf. supra note 3

methods changed with the personality of the writer. Bitter sarcasm, Socratic irony, mocking ridicule, trenchant wit -- all are the instruments the satirists use to expose, censure, or deride evils of every kind. The function of satire must be constructive or instructive if the social criticism it offers is to be of value, and thus in essence the satirist becomes a preacher.[1] The objects of satire must necessarily be real things while the author must be more than an ordinary onlooker. He must have the gift of observation and be able to present figures vividly to the reader. The true satirist shows society its individual and collective villainy, cowardice, and hypocrisy. Then it holds these human failings before a mirror for all to see, for as one definition explains:

> Satire is a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief reason for the kind reception it meets with in the world and that so very few are offended with it.[2]

To fulfill his obligation to society, the satirist must be "the one man picked out of ten thousand, an honest man".[3] Otherwise his work degenerates into mere flattery.

Satire then, understood as a means by which wicked-

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[1]Cf. sermones and sermons.

[2]Jonathan Swift, "The Battle of the Books," The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, Temple Scott (ed.) (12 Vols., London: George Bell and Sons, 1900), I, 160.

[3]Gilbert Cannan, op. cit. I, 15.

ness or folly is censured, was the field in which both Horace and Ben Jonson worked. In the majority of their output the satiric can be found. It appears in the epodes, satires, odes and even in the literary epistles[1] of Horace, while in Jonson it can be found in most of his plays, in many of the longer epigrams, and in some of his miscellaneous verse. The characteristic vices and follies of their times offered a variety of subjects to both men. The quest for wealth with its accompaning greed and avarice, legacy-hunting, the empty vanities of the nobles, the poetasters, and the parvenu were topics common to both Horace and Jonson. Other topics were peculiar to the times of each, and therefore may appear in one and not the other. For Horace some of the latter were the epicure, and men who pretended knowledge of Stoic paradoxes; for Jonson, the treatment accorded the stage by the military and law, the prevalence of poisoning, the superstition of alchemy, and the Puritan as a persecutor of the stage were contemporary matters which became the object of his satiric pen. Both were keen observers of men, and the combination of character and circumstance gave them material of constant interest. Saint Paul's Cathedral, the innumerable taverns throughout London, and the theatres themselves were peopled with men and women whose fantastic affectation supplied Jonson with as

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[1]Horace Epist. ii. 1. 34-39, satiric questions upon admiration of old poetry; ibid., ii. 1. 117, satire on the notion that anyone can be a poet; Epist. ii. 3. 1-5, satire on the violation of literary unity.

abundant material for ridicule as the new eccentric characters swarming along the Appian Way or frequenting the Forum did for Horace. The everyday occurrences of their lives were incorporated into their works with the result that Horace left a vivid picture of conditions in Roman times before and under Augustus, while Jonson left one of England under Elizabeth, and James, as well as a prelude to the events which brought about the downfall of Charles.

Yet Horace's type of satire differs from that of Jonson in some important ways. The former writes openly, avoiding extravagance in thought and expression, and prefers the golden mean in all things. He writes about human follies or vices as a good-humored moralist who is pointing out his own mistakes as well as those of human beings in general. Barely is the caustic remark to be found in Horace. In his satire one finds the good-natured commentary upon the foibles and follies of men with whom he lived, whereas in Jonson's satire the playful irony is generally lacking and Jonson confines himself to ridicule or open criticism. As he himself says in the Induction to Every Man out of His Humour:

> With an armed and resolved hand,
> I'll strip the ragged follies of the time
> Naked as at their birth ...
> ... and with a whip of steel,
> Print wounding lashes in their iron ribs.

The gentle art of Horace by which he presents some failing of human nature in its most glaring form, holds it up for

amusement, and says, after we have enjoyed the story he has told about another person, or even himself, "de te fabula narratur"[1] ("the story is about you!") is unmatched by Jonson. The latter, lacking the personal note which endears Horace to his readers, relies more upon indignation and sometimes even malice to make his satire potent. Jonson was a far more trenchant satirist than Horace, and his judgments of men and their follies were most biting and severe. No one was exempt from his judgment, and perhaps there is some truth in Drummond's saying that Jonson would rather lose a friend than a jest.[2]

Both Jonson and Horace saw a kinship between satire and comedy. Sometimes the humor found in Horace accompanies a deep seriousness, but often it is found in the witticisms he has to offer in his comments about the characters he draws. Jonson's characters are essentially comic owing to the fact that they are saturated with some quality which makes them ludicrous. Both writers make use of the anti-climax in their writings, by adding a little satiric tag to their lyrics. Typical of this in Horace is the epode in which Alfius sings the praises of country scenery in sixty-six lines, after which the epode concludes

> Haec ubi locutus faenerator Alfius,
> Jam, iam futurus rusticus,
> Omnem redegit Idibus pecuniam,
> Quaerit Kalendis ponere.[3]

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[1]Horace Serm. i. 1. 69-70.

[2]William Drummond, op. cit., p. 87.

[3]Horace Ep. 2. 67-70.

("When the usurer Alfius had uttered this, on the very point of beginning the farmer's life, he called in all his funds upon the Ides -- and on the Kalends seeks to put them out again!")

Comparable to this is one of Jonson's epigrams in which he skillfully sketches the character of Don Surly as a man who prides himself on his vices and thinks that they are proofs of his greatness. In the last lines Jonson advises him:

> Svrly, vse other arts, these only can
> Stile thee a most great foole, but no great man.[1]

Another familiar device in literature which Horace and Ben Jonson employed was the use of names to suggest types of characters or the vices they represented. Satire results in their attributing to a character a dominant characteristic which obliterates all other qualities, and it was thus they created characters whose very names proclaim them to be misers, voluptuaries, spendthrifts, zealots, gluttons, or other extremists whose weakness overtops their other qualities. In Horace such characters are found as Pantolabus, literally meaning "taking everything", and specifically referring to a parasite; Porcius, "relating to swine", and transferred by meaning to the glutton who swallowed the cake whole at a dinner; Opimius, defined as "well-fed" or "fat", and denoting a wealthy man; Novius from the root of the word for "new" and connoting an

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[1]Ben Jonson, Epigrammes, xviii, lines 21-22.

"upstart"; Avidienus derived from "avidus" (greedy) and indicating a "miser". Nomentanus and Naevius were names originally used by Lucilius to represent the spendthrift type[1] and taken over with this meaning by Horace. Nasidienus because of his ostentation signified the typical parvenu in the early Empire, and this name was used with the same connotation in later Latin literature.[2] In like manner the "humours" of Ben Jonson promise satire, and the names of his characters proclaim their satirical purpose -- Subtle, Morose, Fastidious, Brisk, Sir Epicure Mammon, Sir Amorous la Foole, Carlo Buffone, Zeal-of-the-land Busy, Pertinax Surly. Others represent their nearest of kin in the animal kingdom such as Volpone (the fox), Volture (the vulture), Corvino (a raven), Mosca (the gadfly). Still others like Bobadill, the braggart incarnate, become living qualities of the failings or vices they represent.

Both Horace and Jonson, moreover, used satire as a means of personal criticism as well as a prod for moral reform. Horace maintained that personal satire should be subordinate to the moral purpose of satire, and generally his works bear out this idea. Some authorities[3] have suspected thin disguises for real names in Cervius for

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[1] H. Rushton Fairclough, Ad Serm. 1. 1. 102

[2] J.W. Duff, Roman Satire, p. 72.

[3] J.W. Duff, A Literary History of Rome, pp. 511-512.

Servius, and Catius for Matius, but taken as a whole his purpose was to satirize classes rather than individual shortcomings. On the other hand, Jonson was not so discreet. Admittedly[1] he wrote "on Marston" and with him included Thomas Dekker in the Poetaster. Two other conspicuous cases in which characters were identified with particular individuals have been found in his plays. Volpone supposedly satirized Sutton, the founder of Charterhouse, and Lanthorn Leatherhead in Bartholomew Fair was identified with Inigo Jones.[2] How many less conspicuous figures were touched by the "razor edge of his pen" it is impossible to say, but from his own remarks there were individuals who would take his comments or characterizations as personal affronts. Unlike the later poet Horace had specifically said "But my pen will never attack any person."[3] This use of more frequent personal satire by Jonson, then, is a difference between his writings and those of Horace. While recognizing these differences, one is able to find in Jonson and Horace likenesses which establish their close resemblance in satiric writing.

One of the most conspicuous features of social life in Augustan times with which Horace dealt in many of his

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[1]Drummond, op. cit., p. 13

[2]Hugh Walker, English Satire and Satirists, (London: J. M. Dent and Sons; 1925), p. 117.

[3]Horace Serm. ii. 1. 39-41

writings was the never-ending quest for wealth. He derides the man whose ambition is to amass great wealth, and one who never ceases from his labors as long as there is one richer than himself. He holds up as a model for this man the wise ant who stores up no more than she has use for.[1] He asks of what use are large possessions since amassed wealth will only prove a burden:

> nescis quo valeat nummus, quem praebeat usum?
> panis ematur, holus, vini sextarius; adde
> quis humana sibi doleat natura negatis.
> an vigilare metu exanimem, noctesque diesque
> formidare malos fures, incendia, servos,
> ne te compilent fugientes, hoc iuvat? horum
> semper ego optarim pauperrimus esse bonorum.[2]

("Don't you know what money is for, what end it serves? You may buy bread, greens, a measure of wine, and such other things as would mean pain to our human nature, if withheld. What, to lie awake half-dead with fear, to be in terror night and day of wicked thieves, of fire, of slaves, who may rob you and run away -- is this so pleasant? In such blessings I could wish ever to be the poorest of the poor".)

He cites the story of a miser, who, though he was so rich he had to measure his money rather than count it, dressed no better than a slave, and feared he would die of starvation. His ironic end as pictured by Horace should deter a man from the desire to gain useless wealth:

> At hunc liberta securi/divisit medium[3]

("Yet a freed-woman cut him in two with an axe".)

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[1]Horace Serm. i. 1. 32-40.

[2]Ibid. 73-79.

[3]Ibid. 99-100.

To Horace wealth was good only when in use, and its generous use he thought admirable.[1] In fact, to him the true king was one who "ingentes oculo inretorto/spectat acervos" ("can gaze upon huge piles of treasure without casting an envious glance behind").[2] To him true riches did not mean revenues, and he considered that man blest to whom the gods had given enough and no more.[3] Money was the coveted prize of Horace's day, but he hoped to win his fellow Romans over to the idea that the happy life could be reached by moderation. Health and wealth, he says, are not companions, and the man "to whose lot sufficient falls, should covet nothing more."[4] To Horace, avarice was the underlying cause of misery in men's lives, and the cure he recommended was the practice of moderation:

> Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines,[5]
> Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.

> ("There is measure in all things. There are, in short, fixed bounds, beyond and short of which right can find no place.")

As for himself, he says:

> haud paravero,
> Quod aut avarus ut Chremes terra premam

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[1]Horace Carm. ii. 2. 1-8.

[2]Ibid. ii. 2. 23-24.

[3]Horace Carm. iii. 16. 43-44.

[4]Horace Epist. i. 2. 46.

[5]Horace Serm. i. 1. 106.

Discinctus aut perdam nepos."[1]

("I will not lay up treasure, either to bury in the ground, like miser Chremes, or to squander like some reckless spendthrift.")

Ben Jonson, likewise directs his satire against the wealthy. Volpone is a masterpiece of satiric drama which depicts creatures greedily seeking power and wealth. In this play whose subject is the attraction and power of wealth Jonson's satire falls upon the fools as well as the knaves. The Fox is no miser but a Nomentanus,[2] a spendthrift who uses his wealth as a token of mastery. In lines addressed to his gold, he says:

> Deare saint Riches, the dumbe god, that
> giu'st all men tongues:
> That canst doe nought, and yet mak'st men
> doe all things;
> The price of soules; euen hell, with thee
> to boot,
> Is made worth heauen! Thou are vertue, fame,
> Honour, and all things elset Who can get thee,
> Hee shall be noble, valiant, honest, wise.[3]

His love of power and wealth knows no bounds, and he is pictured as the most selfish and unfeeling of voluptuaries. But Mosca assures the audience in Horatian lines[4] that it is not by miserliness that his master has grown rich:

> And, besides, sir,
> You are not like the thresher, that doth stand

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[1]Horace Ep. 1. 32-34.

[2]Horace Serm. ii. 1. 22.

[3]Ben Jonson, Volpone I. i. 21-27.

[4]Horace Serm. ii. 3. 111-119.

> With a huge flaile, watching a heape of corne,
> And, hungrie, dares not taste the smallest graine,
> But feeds on mallowes, and such bitter herbs;
> Nor like the merchant, who hath filled his vaults
> With Romagnia, and rich Canadian wines,
> Yet drinkes the lees of Lombards vineger:
> You will not lie in straw, whilst moths and wormes
> Feed on your sumptuous hangings and soft beds.[1]

Mere possession of wealth means nothing to Volpone, but the power it gives him to manipulate other men is what he seeks. As the play ends justice is meted out to Volpone, the monster of greed, who had by his lust for power tried to add to his wealth:

> 1st Advocates:...Thou, Volpone,
> By bloud and ranke a gentleman, canst not fall
> Vnder like censure; but our judgment on thee
> Is, that thy substance all be straight confiscate
> To the hospitall of the Incurabili:
> And since the most was gotten by imposture,
> By feigning lame, gout, palsey, and such diseases,
> Thou art to lie in prison, crampt with irons,
> Till thou bee'st sicke, and lame indeed. Remoue him.[2]

The play is a vignette of life, or to use the motto which Jonson himself used for this drama: "Simul et jucunda, et idonea dicere vitae".[3] ("The play is both entertaining and helpful to life").

Another one of the social evils of Horace's time was the practice of seeking legacies. In his age it had become as prevalent as political bribery has in the present.

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[1]Ben Jonson, Volpone I. 1. 52-61

[2]Ibid. V. viii. 117-125.

[3]Horace Epist. ii. 3. 334.

It was customary to leave estates, whether large or small, to friends, and such a custom led to the cultivation of friendships in the hope of becoming a beneficiary. Wealth had now fallen to the lot of many freedmen who were without family connections, and they were the objects of the flattery of legacy hunters who, though they might be of higher position, felt the need of money. In one of his most ironic pieces Horace lays down rules to guide those who need advice in the proper methods for obtaining a legacy. His contempt for the fortune-hunters of his day is evident in the witty advice the seer Tiresias gives to Ulysses on the lucrative ways of fortune-hunting:

> Magna minorve foro si res certabitur olim,
> Vivet uter locuples sine gnatis, improbus ultro
> Qui meliorem audax vocet in ius, illius esto
> Defensor; fama civem causaque priorem
> Sperne, domi si gnatus erit fecundave coniunx.[1]
>
> ("If some day a case, great or small, be contested in the Forum, whichever of the parties is rich and childless, villain though he be, who with wanton impudence calls the better man into court, do you become his advocate; spurn the citizen of the better name and cause, if he have a son at home or a fruitful wife.")

As a final bit of advice he suggests that, after the death of the wealthy man and after the legacy has been announced, for appearance's sake it might be well "si paulum potes illacrimare"[2] ("If you can do a bit of it, drop in some tears")

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[1] Horace Serm. ii. 5. 27-31

[2] Ibid., 103.

Thus Horace assumes an ironical seriousness and ridicules one of the vices of his times. Yet even here is the Horatian touch: the legacy-hunter is not presented as a villain but as a comic character.

Jonson's characters Voltore, Corbaccio, Corvino, and Mosca in Volpone have a kinship with the legacy-hunters Horace satirized. At any cost, no matter how despicable, each hopes to be the heir to the fortunes of Volpone. As the Fox, supposedly dead, listens to the harangue of the would-be heirs, one recalls the old woman from Thebes who by the terms of her will tried to elude her heir and was buried in this manner according to Horace:

> cadaver
> Unctum oleo large nudis umeris tulit heres,
> Scilicet elabi si posset mortua; credo,
> Quod nimium institerat viventi.[1]

("Her corpse, well oiled, her heir carried on his bare shoulders. She wanted to see whether she could give him the slip when dead. I suppose, when she was living, he harrassed her too much.")

The well-known fable of the fox and the crow used by Horace is found in Volpone in the discussion of Mosca and the Fox upon a gift one of the legacy-hunters has brought to the latter --

> Mosc. Huge
> Massie, and antique, with your name inscrib'd
> And arms engrauen.
> Volp. Good! and not a foxe
> Stretch'd on the earth, with fine delusive sleights

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[1]Horace Serm. ii. 5. 85-88.

Mocking a gaping crow? ha, Mosca![1]

The Fox encouraged the legacy-hunters as long as he was the recipient of gifts. Later Mosca tells Corvino that he has sent the other legacy-seekers home with "Nothing bequeath'd them, but to crie, and curse."[2] This speech was adapted from Horace who had said to another fortune-hunter:

invenietque
Nil sibi legatum, praeter plorare, suisque.[3]

("And he shall find that nothing is left to him and his but to whine.")

In addition to the avaricious and the legacy-hunters, Horace and Ben satirized the men whom they judged as worthless poets of their own times. Quality Horace was interested in; quantity received but scorn from him. Many of his contemporaries, especially the rich, did copious writing merely to secure notoriety for themselves. Horace refers often to this indiscriminate writing. Challenged to a scribbling contest with Crispinus who wanted to find out who could "write the most",[4] Horace praises the gods because they fashioned him "of meagre wit and lowly spirit, of rare and scanty speech!"[5] With such poetasters as

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[1]Ben Jonson, Volpone, I. 1. 93-96.

[2]Ben Jonson, Volpone, I. v. 36-37.

[3]Horace Serm., ii. 5. 68-69.

[4]Horace Serm., i. 4. 14-16.

[5]Ibid., 17-18.

Crispinus represented, Horace had no desire to compete. Nor did he care to be among those who gathered an admiring audience to listen to their compositions. Rather bitterly does he sum up the public attitude toward the prolific writer:

> Mutavit mentem populus levis et calet uno
> Scribendi studio; pueri patresque severi
> Fronde comas vincti cenant et carmina dictant.[1]

> ("The fickle public has changed its taste and is fired throughout with a scribbling craze; sons and grave sires sup crowned with leaves and dictate their lines.")

The skilled and unskilled alike were writing poetry in his day and he had no high regard for the second-rate poet.

Ben Jonson too had detractors among his contemporaries as the 'Apologetical Dialogue' to the Poetaster proves. The object of his writing this play is given in his own words:

> Three yeeres,
> They did prouvoke me with their petulant stiles
> On euery stage; And I at last, vnwilling,
> But weary, I confesse, of so much trouble,
> Thought, I would try, if shame could vinne vpon 'hem.
> And therefore chose Avgustus Caesars times,
> When wit, and artes were at their height in Rome,
> To show that Virgil, Horace, and the rest
> Of those great master-spirits did not want
> Detractors, then, or practisers against them:
> And by this line (although no paralel)
> I hop'd at last they would sit downe, and blush.[2]

Added to the general indictment of the players, accusing

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[1]Horace Epist. ii. 1. 108-110.

[2]Ben Jonson, Poetaster "Apologetical Dialogue," lines 96-107

them of fleecing and prying upon honest citizens[1] is the personal attack on individual actors. Jonson anticipates and answers many of the accusations brought against him in the Satiromastix by Marston and Dekker. Like Horace,[2] Jonson felt that his satire had caused his unpopularity, and using the first satire of Horace's Second Book, in the person of the Roman poet he appeals to Trebatius, a great Roman lawyer, for his opinion on the writing of satire. As Horace he "now stands taxt of impudence, self-loue, and arrogance, by these, who share no merit in themselves."[3] Certainly he criticized some of the players, but as he adds, he touched but a few of them, and those few he refused to name. He looks upon his own detractors contemptuously and only regrets the hostility of some "better natures" whom they (presumably Marston and Dekker) have drawn to the opposing side. Jonson concentrates the play on Marston (Crispinus) and the cure administered to him in the fifth act. In it Horace and Vergil decide upon the sentence given to Crispinus, the poetaster. Horace is allowed to give him pills "that should purge his brains, and stomach of those tumorous heates".[4]

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[1]Jonson, Poetaster III. iv. 303-313.

[2]Horace Serm., 1. 4.

[3]Ben Jonson, Poetaster, V. iii. 355-357.

[4]Ibid., V. iii. 391-395.

to get rid of his high-sounding words which are "a signe of a winde braine".[1] Vergil's pronouncement is:

> Looke, you take
> Each morning, of old Catoes principles
> A good draught, next your heart; that walke vpon,
> Till it be well digested: Then come home,
> And taste a piece of Terence, sucke his phrase
> In stead of lycorice; and, at any hand,
> Shun Platvs, and old Ennivs, they are meates
> Too harsh for a weake stomacke. Vse to reade
> (But not without a tutor) the best Greekes:
> As Orphevs, Hvsaevs, Pindarvs,
> Hesiod, Callimachvs, and Theocrite,
> High Homer, but beware of Lycophron:
> He is too darke, and dangerous a dish.
> You must not hunt for wild, out-landish termes,
> To stuffe out a peculiar dialect;
> But let your matter runne before your words:
> And if, at any time, you chaunce to meet
> Some Gallo-belgick phrase, you shall not straight
> Packe your poore verse to giue it entertainment;
> But let it passe: and doe not thinke your selfe;
> Much damnified, if you doe leaue it out;
> When, not your vnderstanding, nor the sense
> Could well receiue it. This faire abstinence,
> In time, will render you more sound, and cleere;
> And this haue I prescrib'd to you, in place
> Of a strict sentence: which till he performe,
> Attire him in that robe. And hence-forth, learne
> To beare your selfe more humbly; not to swell,
> Or breathe your insolent, and idle spight,
> On him, whose laughter, can your worst affright.[2]

In this play Horace and Vergil represent the higher type of writer, and Horace, "the master of both vertue, and wisdome"[3] is the dramatic counterpart of Crispinus.

Men of high estate and the lofty nobles were also

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[1]Ben Jonson, Poetaster V. iii. 498

[2]Ibid., 531-565.

[3]Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discoveries", Ben Jonson 1641: Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden 1619, ed C. E. Harrison (London: John Lane, the Bodley Head Ltd., reprint 1923), p. 98.

the objects of the satire of Horace and Jonson. In the hands of Horace such people often became comic characters. He does not ridicule unworthy nobles, but he subtly tells his readers that he would not exchange his lot for that of the four-hundred. In gentle reproof of the empty vanities of the nobles he explains why the blessings of his life are greater than those of the man who has achieved either social recognition or political ambition:

> nam mihi continuo maior quaerenda foret res
> atque salutandi plures, ducendus et unus
> et comes alter, uti ne solus rusve peregreve
> exirem, plures calones atque caballi
> pascendi, ducenda petorrita. nunc mihi curto
> ire licet mulo vel si libet usque Tarentum,
> mantica cui lumbos onere ulceret atque eques armos:
> obiciet nemo sordes mihi, quas tibi, Tilli,
> cum Tiburte via praetorem quinque sequuntur
> te pueri, lasanum portantes oenophorumque.
> hoc ego commodius quam tu, praeclare senator,
> milibus atque aliis vivo.[1]

("For at once I should have to enlarge my means, to welcome more callers, to take one or two in my company so as not to go abroad or into the country alone; I should have to keep more pages and ponies and take a train of wagons. Today, if I will, I may go on a bob-tailed mule even to Tarentum, the saddle-bag's weight galling his loins, and rider his withers. No one will taunt me with meanness as he does you, praetor Tillius, when on the Tibur road five slaves follow you carrying a commode and a case of wine. In this and a thousand other ways I live in more comfort than you, illustrious senator".)

This is certainly not an enviable picture of the man of power, but it is an example of Horace's method of satirizing the man who has won political office and its resultant social status. It represents Horace's attempt to cure a

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[1]Horace Serm., 1. 6. 100-111.

social evil without stirring up great enmity between classes or hostility toward himself.

The nobility were also the object of Jonson's deft thrusts. After the execution of Mary, courtiers exchanged gaiety and their former fashions for fantastic refinements. It was at these formal but affected manners of the Court that Jonson directed Cynthia's Revels. Though he lived with the great, he could not resist satirizing the absurd manners and euphuistic language of the courtiers and court ladies.[1] This play contains the puerile games which passed for witty amusements at Court. The game of "substantives and adjectives" is played with such gravity that it becomes ridiculous, and one wonders what the reaction of courtiers was since they were present at the performance. Only the tactless Jonson could have Mercury describe a courtier as one who has essentially two parts: pride and ignorance.[2] But perhaps the common people made the play a success because they undoubtedly were delighted by the silly tricks of the courtiers whom Ben exposed to ridicule. Yet the fopperies and the affectations were typical of this class of people, and in their portrayal Jonson fulfilled one of the primary functions of satire.

In Horace's day there were many men of low station

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[1]Ben Jonson, Cynthia's Revels, IV. 1. 136-214.

[2]Ibid., II. ii. 77-78.

who suddenly acquired wealth. Such was the opportunity offered to one of lowly estate in Augustus' regime. Because of his wealth his place in society changed, but, as Horace observes, his nature did not. To win the favor of those in higher positions, elaborate dinners were given, and the obsequiousness and unreserved flattery which followed often brought rewards. Horace delights in ridiculing the ostentation of the typical parvenu. Men of fashion and literary men who flock to enjoy the exquisite dinner prepared by the host who fancies himself a learned epicure show themselves as the fair-weather friends they are. These were the ill-bred fellows who made use of their napkins to conceal amusement at their host's display. The fiasco of a dinner party which this satire[1] describes is also directed against the affected erudition of epicures. The long lists of foods enumerated, the methods of preparation explained, and the odd or realistic effects in the arrangement of food on platters represent the host as an aspiring epicure who, by this elaborate dinner, hoped to find favor with Maecenas. The absurd solemnities are the objects of Horace's irony. In his time the new-made millionaire drew invective from many sources. Horace speaking for the multitude says:

> Lupis et agnis quanta sortito obtigit,
> Tecum mihi discordia est,
> Hibericis peruste funibus latus

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[1]Horace Serm., ii.8.

Et crura dura compede.[1]

("As great as is the enmity between lambs and wolves, by Nature's laws decreed, so great is that twixt me and you--you whose flanks are scarred by the Spanish rope, and whose legs are callous with hard shackles".)

In his time these newly-rich were walking the Appian Way, sitting in knights' places at the theatre, and even commanding the soldiers of Rome.

Somewhat akin to such pretenders are the Londoners whom Jonson ridicules in "The New Crie". These were men who feigned knowledge about the "states of Christendome". Jonson ends this epigram in this satiric note:

> and therefore doe not onely shunne
> Others more modest, but contemne vs too,
> That know not so much state, wrong, as they doo.[2]

So too his English "monsieur" whom he depicts in another epigram is the essence of ostentation:

> Would you beleeve, when you this Mvnsievr see,
> That his whole body should speake <u>french</u>, not he?
> That so much skarfe of <u>France</u>, and hat, and fether
> And shooe, and tye, and garter should come hether,
> And land on one, whose face durst never bee
> Toward the sea, farther then halfe-way tree?
> That he vntrauell'd should be <u>french</u> so much
> As french-men in his companie, should seem dutch?
> Or had his father, when he did him get,
> The <u>french</u> disease, with which he labours yet?
> Or hung some Mvnsievrs picture on the wall
> By which his damme concieu'd him, clothes and all?
> Or is it some <u>french</u> statue? No, 'T doth moue,
> And stoupe, and cringe. O then, it need must proue
> The new french-taylors motion, monthly made,
> Daily to turne in Pavls, and helpe the trade.[3]

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[1]Horace <u>Ep</u>., 4. 1-4.

[2]Ben Jonson, <u>Epigrammes</u>, xcii. 38-40.

[3]<u>Ibid</u>., "On English Monsieur", lxxviii.

In general Horace gives little note to women in his writings. Two excoriating epodes are addressed to coarse women whom he had evidently known.[1] Another he addresses to a false sweetheart who, though she had professed undying love for Horace in former days, has now deserted him.[2] This epode concludes with Horace saying that her new lover is doomed and, as for himself, he in turn will laugh. This type of banter is nowhere found in satiric pieces Jonson wrote concerning women. Most of his lyrics addressed to them bear out the summary C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson give of his attitude toward the fair sex:

> Not merely was chivalry alien to his nature, but even the most admirable qualities of individual women had to conquer their way to his recognition through a medium of cynical distrust and disparagement of the sex at large. In this very collection, only a couple of pages from the beautiful morning hymn to the Countess of Bedford, the reader comes upon an epigram which suggests in the plainest terms that all women are harlots.[3]

Ben emphasizes two sins of women almost to the exclusion of all others: pride and lechery. Extrevagant personal adornment was censured by him in the Elizabethan vanity of such women as Livia, Semiphronia, and Fulvia.[4] In the poem entitled "A Satirical Shrub" he certainly bears out

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[1]Horace Ep., 8, 12

[2]Horace Ep., 15. 3-10.

[3]C.H. Herford and Percy Simpson, (ed.) Ben Jonson II, 367.

[4]Characters in Catiline.

the judgment of the authorities cited above. He says:

> Knew I this Woman? yes; And you doe see
> How penitent I am, or I should be:
> Doe not you aske to know her, she is worse
> Then all Ingredients made into one curse
> And that pour'd out upon Man-Kind can be:
> Thinke but the Sin of all her sex, (Tis she:
> I could forgive her being proud: a whore:
> Perjur'd: and painted: if she were no more--
> But she is such, as she might yet forestall
> The Divell, and be the damning of us all.[1]

Or again his cynical regard for women is apparent in his comparison of the world with a woman:

> I know thy formes are studied arts,
> Thy subtill wayes, be narrow straits;
> Thy curtesie but sodaine starts
> And what thou call'st thy gifts are baits.
> I know too, that thou strut, and paint,
> Yet art thou both shrunke up and old;
> That onely fooles make thee a saint;
> And all thy good is to be sold
> I know thou whole art but a shop
> Of toyes and trifles, traps and snares,
> To take the weake, or make them stop:
> Yet art thou falser then thy wares.[2]

Perhaps the most spiteful remarks addressed to a woman are found in the epigram he wrote on the "Court Pucell". This particular lyric was written about Cecily Boulstred,[3] and Ben says of her:

> Indeed, her Dressing some man might delight,
> Her face there's none can like by Candle light.[4]

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[1]Ben Jonson, Underwood, "A Satyricall Shrub" xx. 15-24.

[2]Ibid., "To the World. A Farewell for a Gentlewoman, vertuous and noble."

[3]Palmer, Ben Jonson, pp. 104-105.

[4]Ben Jonson, Underwood, "An Epigram on the Court Pucell".

Other topics which are an index to the society of their times were treated by Horace and Jonson. These have no direct relation, but are included because of the satiric element found in them. In these particular instances the satire is aimed at the tendencies of a particular time, whereas the previous ones were of a more universal application. Thus in Horace's writings can be found many references to Stoicism while in Jonson the problems of poisoning, alchemy, and Puritanism are treated.

Drawing whatever suited him from the philosophies which came in from Greece, Horace swore allegiance to no school of philosophic thought. A man of his temperament -- full of the joy of living -- was unable to adhere to the austerity of Stoic teaching, and he is found ridiculing some of the Stoic paradoxes of his day. That all men but the philosophers are slaves is the topic in the seventh satire in the Second Book. Davus, the slave, talking with his master, opens with a moral sermon on inconsistency in virtue. Better than this is the steadiness in vice which he illustrates in the example of the gambler who, because gout so stiffened his fingers that he was unable to pick up the dice, hired somebody to do this for him. There is comedy in this little dialogue which satirises the Stoic whose diatribes the poet imitates. It may also be considered a satire on the egotism of people who set themselves up as authorities to explain half-truths which they only half-

understand. Actually Davus was merely reporting lessons of wisdom which a servant of Crispinus had overheard at his master's door, and therefore was expounding doctrines about which he knew very little. In another sermon[1] Horace is speaking with Damasippus, a man who has been converted to Stoicism by the maxim that all men except the wise are insane. This doctrine gives Horace an opportunity to ridicule the airs and manners of the Stoic preachers of his age. But here too, in the longest of his satires, the poet employs a light humorous vein. Thinking he is exempt from all categories of insanity, he turns the laugh upon himself when he allows Davus to tell him to what class of fools he belongs. The slave, by right of the privileges given to him during the Saturnalia, tells him that he, in aping greater men, is like the frog who tried to swell into the ox's size, that he writes verses, and that he has a terrible temper. At last Horace ends the dialogue with: "O maior tandem parcas, insane, minori!" (O, greater one, spare, I pray, the lesser madman).[2] In this satire the Stoic paradox has been changed to fit the poet's purpose. In stealing the wares of the Stoics, Horace is as clever as Mercury was in his theft from Apollo.[3] By skillful maneuvering, Horace has brought the Stoic to his

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[1]Horace Serm., ii. 3.
[2]Ibid., line 326.
[3]Horace Carm., i. 10. 9-12.

own place amid the crowd of madmen.

One of the most characteristic traits of Jonson's times is found in Every Man in His Humour. Poisoning was quite an art in the days of Elizabeth, and its use was both well understood and very common in London. In a pamphlet issued at this time, Doctor Ruy Lopez, who was physician-in-chief to Queen Elizabeth, was named as the man who had distilled the ineffective poisons for Leicester,[1] In those days too, Elizabeth herself was blamed for not removing Mary, Queen of Scots, in the Italian fashion by poisoning her garments.[2] In fact, many attempts were made upon the Queen's own life from 1594-1598,[3] and in the latter year two men were hanged for poisoning the queen's saddle.[4] Jonson could not have incorporated into this drama a more common vice of the day. In it, Kitely becomes very alarmed when Well-bred suggests to the former's wife that her husband's clothes or even the wine he drank at dinner might be poisoned. Jealousy prompts Kitely to exclaim:

> Now God forbid: Oh me. Now I remember,
> My wife drunke to me, last; and chang'd the cup;
> And bade me weare this cursed sute today.

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[1]Lytton Strachey, Elizabeth and Essex, A Tragic History (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928), pp. 68-92.

[2]William Gifford, op. cit., I, xix.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

> See, if heau'n suffer murder vndiscover'd:
> I feele me ill; give me some mithridate,
> Some mithridate and oile.[1]

Apprehensively he continues, imagining that he feels the poison beginning to operate upon him. This, in Jonson's day, was no idle fear, and people were kept in a constant state of agitation by the ever-present dread of poisoning.

Still another drama of Jonson's which reflects a true image of the time is The Alchemist. The background for this play is a contemporary superstition. In 1610 the claims of the alchemists were respected by the Courts of Europe,[2] and both the wise and ignorant were haunted by dreams of transmuting baser metals to gold. So the alchemist, pretending knowledge of the philosopher's stone by which such marvels could be brought about, was a well-known figure in Ben's day. The drama is a detailed exposure of an obsolete art. Jonson rebukes the deception and satirizes the follies which give knaves such as Subtle, Face, and Dol an opportunity to prey upon such people as Sir Epicure Mammon, a rich man drawn to them by dreams of greater wealth, Dapper a clerk, hoping to secure a spirit that will bring him luck and make him a successful gamester, Drugger the tobacconist inquiring how to build his shop so that he may be lucky in his trade, Tribulation, Wholesome,

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[1]Ben Jonson, Every Man in His Humour, IV. viii. 20-25.

[2]William Gifford, op. cit., II. 2.

and Ananias, the Puritans from Amsterdam preparing to deal with the powers of darkness in the interest of their church. Essentially Jonson is describing forms of imposture which continue as long as the mysteries of nature continue, and there are unscrupulous persons to exploit them for their own profit. Jonson ends this play ironically with the ablest villain successfully outwitting the rest and making peace with authority.

In Ben's day the Puritans were attacking stage plays as a corrupting influence upon the populace. Tragedies, they decided, were examples of murders and treacheries which honest citizens should not have set before them, while comedies showed nothing but intrigue and wantonness.[1] Therefore they declared that plays were the avowed enemies of virtue and religion. In October, 1614, Ben wrote Bartholomew Fair which expressed his attitude toward Puritanism. In this play one finds the best parallel to the humor of Horace. There is nothing bitter in it; Jonson is tolerant as he looks upon the common life of the time. Iniquities are neither condoned nor condemned, but somehow the zealous Zeal-of-the-land Busy becomes the inconsistent Puritan who at one time exhorts his company not to look at the venders or showmen because their wares are "the wares of the devils and the whole Fair is the shop of Satan", and at another time devours two and a half

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[1]Palmer, Ben Jonson, pp. 192-195.

pigs and drinks a "pailful". Zeal-of-the-land Busy attacks Lanthorn Leatherhead, a hobby-horse seller, but the latter says that his show has been licensed by the Master of the Revels. But the Puritan concept of all plays is indicated in the answer given by Busy, the fanatic religionist:

> The Master of (the) Rebells hand, thou hast; Satan's: hold thy peace, thy scurrility, shut vp thy mouth, thy profession is damnable, and in pleading for it, thou dost plead for Baal. I have long opened my mouth wide, and gaped, I have gaped as the oyster for the tide, after thy destruction: but cannot compasse it by sute, or dispute; so that I looke for a bickering, ere long, and then a battell.[1]

This is satire on the jargon of the Puritans in their public prayers and preaching.[2] In the last sentence of the quotation there is also a prediction of the events which are to come to England. This drama was an attack upon the hypocrisy and ignorance of the persecutors of the stage.

Both Horace and Jonson through the medium of satire paint a picture of the types of people of their own times. Some of the characters are peculiar to Rome or to England, but yet the type of person or the folly personified is universal. Both Jonson and Horace had noble aims in view, and each tried to cope with the maladies of his

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[1]Ben Jonson, Bartholomew Fair, V. v. 19-25.

[2]Francis Cunningham in The Works of Ben Jonson quotes Eachard in his Contempt of the Clergy: "Our souls are constantly gaping after thee, O Lord, yea verily, our souls do gape even as an oyster gapeth".

own generation. They wanted to teach their audience to improve its morals and to correct its taste. Mankind interested both of these authors, and consequently both drew types to interest mankind. Human nature is analyzed by them, and their shrewd observance of the activities of man resulted in their leaving true pictures of their own times. Though Horace and Jonson sometimes differed in method, each adhered to the fundamental idea of teaching through his literary works.

CHAPTER IV

HORACE AND BEN JONSON AS LITERARY CRITICS

Classical plainness plus a repudiation of literary affectations distinguished Ben Jonson from his contemporaries. His genius was not of the true Elizabethan form, and the fantastic comedies, romantic tragedies, and the histories of England being written by his fellow dramatists such as Marston, Dekker, Fletcher, Beaumont, and Shakespeare, were beyond his sphere. Ben was the champion of "art", and his realism left no room for romance. His own high regard for old writers such as Horace, Martial, Juvenal, Seneca the elder, and Quintilian, can be traced in all his literary legacy to posterity. According to his theory one need only add his own experience to the observations of the ancients to enrich his composition.[1] Knowledge he ranked with wisdom and truth, and for the "Scioli", busy in the "outsides of learning", he had nothing but contempt. His own counsel is veiled under the wisdom of the ancients, and his subject matter is restricted

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[1]Ben Jonson, "Timber or Discoveries", op. cit., p. 13.

[2]Ibid., p. 9.

by the classical ideal of speaking of common things. His writings, for the most part, combine unimaginative, commonplace ideas with pure taste, sobriety, and proportion. The unknown depths of the soul, the godlike heights of speculation, the research along untrodden paths were not within his realm. To establish more firmly the principles and characteristics of a literary art based on Greek and Roman literature as a standard was his purpose in the role of writer and critic. In short, as Tucker Brooke says of Jonson: "He has set himself to express his judgments of modern matters in English sentences of completely Roman compactness and economy". [1]

Thus championing the cause of the ancients, Ben Jonson naturally found a wealth of material in Horace's contribution to literary criticism. The Roman poet was a man of letters, and one of his chief interests was the improvement and reform of Latin poetry. In connection with the teaching he received in Rome he mentions that he studied the poems of Livius Andronicus and speaks of having read the Iliad[2] before he went to the university at Athens. Here he probably attended the lectures of Cratippus the Peripatetic, and Theomnestus the Academician, and acquired

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[1]Tucker Brooke, "The Renaissance (1500-1660)", A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh, (2 vols.; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948) II, 593.

[2]Horace Epist. ii. 2. 41-42.

his knowledge of their doctrines in addition to studying Archilochus and Alcaeus.[1] In later life too he alludes to his reading of Eupolis, Plato, and Menander,[2] the Greek poets who represented the Old, Middle, and New Comedy respectively. Also he mentions Cratinus and Aristophanes as "true poets",[3] so they were among the Greek writers with whom he was familiar. This close acquaintance with the best of Greek models[4] led him to advocate a classical standard to those who would listen to his advice, and to condemn those falling short of it. He himself was convinced of the greatness of his predecessors, though he was not blind to their defects,[5] and like Jonson looked upon them as "Guides, not Commanders".[6] Already the quarrel between the ancients and moderns[7] had begun, and Horace is found

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[1]Paul Shorey and Gordon J. Laing, (ed.), op. cit., pp. x-xi.

[2]Horace Serm., ii. 3. 11-12.

[3]Ibid., i. 4. 1.

[4]H.J. Rose, A Handbook of Latin Literature, pp. 265 ff.

[5]Horace Serm., i. 10. 54-71

[6]Ben Jonson, "Timber or Discoveries," op. cit., p. 10.

[7]Horace protests against those who can see no good in the moderns. He says it is envy of contemporary merit that accounts for undue praise of the old writers and depreciation of the new. He himself would deal fairly with older Latin writers, and he assumes the greatness of the early Greeks. But he saw that the fervor and the feeling of the old writers were not enough to produce immortal works like those produced by the genius of Greece. The work that had to be done in his time was to find the mastery of form, rhythm, style, proportion, and moderation which would secure for Romans a passport to immortality which had been secured for masterpieces of Greek literature. Cf. Epist., ii. 1. 76-79

relating the development of Roman literature from the time

> Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes
> Intulit agresti Latio.[1]
>
> ("Greece, the captive, made her savage victor captive and brought the arts into rustic Latium).

In the seventeenth century a similar controversy over the merits of modern and older writers broke forth, and Jonson set himself up as a critic just as Horace had in his age.

Though time proves the capriciousness of literary opinion, critics in every age hope to find the touchstone by which their opinions may become infallible. Literary men, styling themselves critics, grope for an undiscoverable law to judge contemporary or near-contemporary writers, and hope to set up rules which will offer the possibility of immortality to writers. Yet some writers who have set up "monuments more lasting than bronze" have often been misjudged or overlooked by critics of their own age. Other writers who have been given the bays by their friends have glided into oblivion, and their monuments have been swept away by the sands of time. Even a man who is considered as the Critic *par excellence* erred in his judgment of his own contemporaries.[2] Thus the blunders of critics themselves have become notorious, and time alone becomes the final judge of literary worth.

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[1]Horace *Epist.*, II. 1. 156-157.

[2]Sainte-Beuve is cited as an example by Albert Guerard, *Education of a Humanist* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 108.

From this point of view Horace and Ben Jonson prove neither better nor worse critics than men in succeeding ages. Their critical judgments were passed favorably upon some authors whose works have survived the onslaught of time, favorably upon some whom succeeding ages have deemed of little worth, and unfavorably upon some who have come down in literary history as writers of immortal works.

Probably the most often repeated comment of Ben Jonson's was his appraisal of William Shakespeare:

> I remember, the Players have often mentioned it as honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing, (Whatsoever he penn'd) hee never blotted out line. My answer hath beene, would he had blotted a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted. And to justifie mine owne candor, (for I lov'd the man, and doe honour his memory (on this side Idolatry) as much as any.) Hee was (indeed) honest, and of an open, and free nature: had an excellent Phantasie; brave notions, and gentle expressions: wherein hee flow'd with that facility, that sometime it was necessary he should be stop'd: Sufflaminandus erat; as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his owne power; would the rule of it had beene so too. Many times hee fell into those things, could not excape laughter: As when hee said in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him: Caesar thou dost me wrong. He replyed: Caesar did never wrong, but with just cause: and such like, which were ridiculous. But hee redeemed his vices, with his vertues. There was ever more in him to be praysed, then to be pardoned.[1]

Thus it was that Jonson with his strong classical leanings attacked the irregularities and the carelessness of the English bard whose works secured his immortality. Likewise other authors of his time were the targets for his

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[1]Ben Jonson "Timber: or Discoveries", op. cit., pp. 28-29.

remarks condemning diffusiveness and formlessness: Spenser and euphuisms, Montaigne and essays in general. Similarly he attacked other writers by referring to them as

> Tamerlanes, and Tamer-chams, of the late age, which had nothing in them but the scenicall strutting, and furious vociferation, to warrant them then to the ignorant gapers.[1]

But for Francis Bacon, Jonson had the highest praise and speaks of him as a writer "who hath filled up all numbers, and performed that in our tongue which may be compared or preferred to insolent Greece or haughty Rome".[2]

In the same fashion Horace treats his contemporaries and other Latin writers. Concerning the merits of his friends, his judgment has sometimes been erroneous, but most notable of his correct judgments were his remarks upon Vergil. In one of his Epistles Horace reminds Augustus that Vergil's Aeneid is a credit to the Emperor's selection of him as a man to write an epic depicting the greatness of Rome.[3] Previously he had praised Vergil for the simplicity and charm found in the Eclogues.[4] Before he had read the Aeneid he had placed Rufus Varius in the foremost rank among epic bards,[5] but he recognized the

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[1]Ben Jonson, "Timber or Discoveries," op. cit., p. 33.

[2]Ibid., pp. 37-38

[3]Horace Epist., ii. 1. 245.

[4]Horace Serm., i. 10. 44-45

[5]Ibid., lines 43-44.

superiority of Vergil's genius. Horace valued the friendship of both these men through whose intimacy he had been admitted into the circle of Maecenas,[1] and though a critic usually cannot judge the works of his friends impartially, in this instance Horace's judgment of Vergil has not been invalidated by time.

On the other hand, the lyric poems of Catullus were accessible to Horace but he never mentions them directly. Catullus' extant works were written upon a variety of topics and composed in a variety of meters, and he himself was one of the most prominent of the pre-Augustan poets. Yet Horace mentions him specifically only once, and may have had him in mind in two additional remarks. In discussing the style by which old writers had won success Horace thus mentions Catullus:

> Ridiculum acri
> Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res.
> Illi scripta quibus comoedia prisca viris est,
> Hoc stabant, hoc sunt imitandi; quos neque pulcher
> Hermogenes umquam legit neque simius iste
> Nil praeter Calvum et doctus cantare Catullum.[2]
>
> ("Jesting often cuts hard knots more forcefully and effectively than gravity. Thereby those great men who wrote Old Comedy won success; therein we should imitate them--writers whom the fop Hermogenes has never read, nor that ape, whose skill lies solely in droning Calvus and Catullus".)

Whether this was said in depreciation of Catullus or not remains a debatable question since the allusion is directed

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[1]Horace Serm., 1. 5. 40-42; 1. 6. 55.

[2]Ibid., 1. 10. 14-19.

against *simius iste*, a man named Demetrius who is otherwise unknown.[1] Nevertheless the tone is slighting toward Catullus. Perhaps for political reasons it was better for Horace to maintain a discreet silence, or perhaps he had just a tinge of human jealousy whereby he was reluctant to concede that Catullus was a great lyricist. Horace had claimed for himself the distinction of introducing lyric measures to Rome[2] and thus had ignored the works of Catullus. But again he clarified this assertion by saying that he was the one who first introduced Alcaeus to Rome.[3] As Catullus had written no Alcaic measures, this latter statement may indicate that there was no opposition toward Catullus on the part of Horace. Authorities differ in opinion as to whether or not Horace opposed Catullus and if so, upon what grounds.[4] Yet the fact remains that there are few references to Catullus in Horace and definitely no outspoken praise of him.

About his other predecessors Horace was more explicit. In giving a summary of conventional literary

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[1]Morris *Ad Serm.*, i. 10. 79

[2]Horace *Carm.*, iii. 30. 8-14.

[3]Horace *Epist.*, i. 19. 25 ff.

[4]Cf. E.K. Rand, "Catullus and the Augustans", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1906), XVII, 23 ff. Ullman, "Horace, Catullus, and Tigellius", *Classical Philology* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1915), X, 270-296.

opinions of the day he says the public refer to Ennius as sapiens et fortis ("wise and valiant"), and he also recalls that Lucilius had called Ennius alter Homerus ("a second Homer").[1] Public opinion thought highly of writers such as Naevius, Pacuvius, Plautus, and Terence, but Horace says:

> Interdum volgus rectum videt, est ubi peccat.
> Si veteres ita miratur laudatque poetas,
> Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet, errat.[2]

> ("At times the public see straight; sometimes they make mistakes. If they admire the ancient poets and cry them up so as to put nothing above them, nothing on their level, they are wrong".)

Then continuing his contrast between the treatment of living writers and of those no longer living, Horace states his own position as critic:

> Non equidem insector delendave carmina Livi
> Esse reor, memini quae plagosum mihi parvo
> Orbilium dictare; sed emendata videri
> Pulchraque et exactis minimum distantia miror.
> Inter quae verbum emicuit si forte decorum, et
> Si versus paulo concinnior unus et alter,
> Iniuste totum ducit venditque poema.[3]

> ("Mark you! I am not crying down the poems of Livius--I would not doom to destruction verses which I remember Orbilius of the rod dictated to me as a boy; but that they should be held faultless, and beautiful, and well-nigh perfect, amazes me. Among them, it may be a pleasing phrase shines forth, or one or two lines are somewhat better turned--then those unfairly carry off and sell the whole poem".)

In speaking of Lucilius he says that the earlier writer

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[1]Horace Epist., ii. 1. 50.

[2]Ibid., lines 63-65.

[3]Ibid., lines 69-75.

was much too wordy and careless[1] but later praises him for his wit[2] and even goes so far as to say that Lucilius is a better man than himself.[3]

In addition to critical evaluation of their predecessors and contemporaries, Horace and Jonson wrote for posterity what they considered the requisites of aspiring writers as well as standards to which they should adhere. The resemblance between their ideas is very marked and the Horatian flame bursts forth from Jonson in many instances. But just how closely he agreed with Horace has to be gleaned from his Discoveries, his prologues, inductions, notes to the readers, and the Works themselves, although the systematic Jonson had written his observations on Horace his Art of Poetry. In his notes to the readers in Sejanus his Fall, he explains that the selection lacks a proper chorus because it is impossible to observe the old majestical setting:

> Nor is it needful, or almost possible, in these Our Times, and to such Auditors, as commonly Things are presented, to obserue the ould state, and splendour of Drammatick Poemes, with preseruation of any popular delight. But of this I shall take more seasonable cause to speake; in my Obseruations vpon Horace his Art of Poetry which (with the Text translated) I intend, shortly to publish.

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[1] Horace Serm., i. 4. 11-13.

[2] Ibid., i. 10. 1-4.

[3] Ibid., ii. 1. 28-29

To this opus on Horace, Jonson frequently alludes, and the literary world has reason to regret that it, along with the scholar's notes of "twice-twelve years" reading in the classics, was destroyed by the fire which consumed his study, as he tells in his Execration upon Vulcan:

> All the old Venusine in Poetrie
> And lighted by the Stagirite, could spie,
> Was there made English:....[1]

These comments and notes from Aristotle, plus the account of his journey to Scotland, an unfinished drama on Persephone, and a history of the reign of Henry V were irreplaceably lost, and only the text of the translation from Horace remained.

In the estimation of both authors the poet must be a man of genius, and if he lacks this, he becomes intolerable. To Horace there was no middle rank for a poet,[2] because with him he associated both genius and a heavenly afflatus. He must be excellent by nature or he was no poet at all:

> Ingenium cui sit, cui mens divinior atque os
> Magna sonaturum, des nominis huius honorem.[3]
>
> ("If one has gifts inborn, if one has a soul divine and tongue of noble utterance, to such give the honor of that name".)

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[1]Ben Jonson, Underwood, "An Execration Upon Vulcan", lines 89-91.

[2]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 372-373.

[3]Horace Serm., 1. 4. 43-44.

In addressing one of the Pisos he says: "Tu nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva"[1] ("You will say nothing and do nothing against Minerva's will"). Here he is reminding his friend that one should write only if he has a natural capacity for composing.

Native talent was likewise set up as the first requisite for a poet by Ben Jonson:

> First, wee require in our Poet, or maker, (for that Title our Language affordes him, elegantly, with the Greeke) a goodnes of naturall wit. For, whereas all other Arts consist of Doctrine, and Precepts: the Poet must bee able by nature, and instinct, to powre out the Treasure of his minde; and, as Seneca saith, Aliquando secundum Anacreontem insanire jucundum esse: by which hee understands, the Poeticall Rapture. And according to that of Plato: Frustra Poeticas fores sui compos pulsavit: And of Aristotle; Nullum magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiae fuit. Nec potest grande aliquid, & supra caeteros loqui, nisi mota mens. Then it riseth higher, as by a devine Instinct, when it contemnes common, and knowne conceptions. It utters somewhat above a mortall mouth. Then it gets a loft, and flies away with his Ryder, whether, before, it was doubtfull to ascend. This the Poets understood by their Helicon, Pegasus, or Parnassus; and this made Ovid to boast:
>
> Est, Deus in nobis; agitante calescimus illo:
> Sedibus aethereis spiritus ille venit.
>
> And Lipsius, to affirme: Scio, Poetam neminem praestantem fuisse, sine parte quadam uberiore divinae aurae. And, hence it is, that the comming up of good Poets, (for I minde not mediocres, or imos is so thinne and rare among us; Every beggerly Corporation affoords the state a Major, or two Bailiffs, yearly: but solus Rex, aut Poeta,

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[1]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 385. The phrase invita Minerva is explained by Cicero, De Off. 1. 31. 10, as meaning adversante et repugnante natura. Cf. Fairclough, Ad Epist., ii. 385

non quotennis nascitur.[1]

Both agree that ingenium ("talent, genius") is indispensable to success, but to it must be added art, meaning training or education. Horace said it was often asked whether a praiseworthy poem was due to nature or art. In answer he says:

> ego nec studium sine divite vena,
> Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium: alterius sic
> Altera poscit opem res et coniurat amice.[2]

("For my part, I do not see of what avail is either study, when not enriched by Nature's vein, or native wit, if untrained; so truly does each claim the other's aid, and make with it a friendly league".)

Ben agrees that it is only when art and nature are combined that a poet can attain perfection. He quotes from the ancients when he says:

> It is the assertion of Tully If to an excellent nature, there happen an accession, or confirmation of Learning, and Discipline, there will then remaine somewhat noble and singular. For, as Simylus saith to Stobaeus ... without Art, Nature can nere bee Perfect; &, without Nature, Art can clayme no being.[3]

And again:

> But Arts and Precepts availe nothing, except nature be beneficiall, and ayding. And therefore these things are no more written to a dull disposition, then rules of husbandry to a barren Soyle. No precepts will profit a Foole; no more then beauty will the blind, or musike the deafe.[4]

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[1]Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discoveries", op. cit., p. 91-92.

[2]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 409-411.

[3]Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discoveries", op. cit., p. 94.

[4]Ibid., p. 66.

To write well, the first essential is knowledge as both Horace and Ben agree, and this can be cultivated by reading the best authors. Horace recommended reading Greek models[1] and especially the matter set forth in "Socratic pages".[2] Ben likewise advises the aspiring poet:

> But, that, which wee especially require in him is an exactnesse of Studie, and multiplicity of reading, which maketh a full man, not alone enabling him to know the History, or Argument of a Poeme, and to report it: but so to master the matter, and Stile, as to shew, hee knowes, how to handle, place or dispose of either, with elegancie, when need shall bee. And not thinke, hee can leape forth suddainely a Poet, by dreaming hee hath been in Parnassus, or, having washt his lips (as they say) in Helicon. There goes more to his making, then so.[3]

Ben also adds:

> But, our Poet must beware, that, his Studie bee not only to learne of himself; for hee that shall affect to doe that, confesseth his ever having a Foole to his master. Hee must read many; but ever the best and choisest: those, that can teach him anything, he must ever account his masters, and reverence: among whom Horace, and (he that taught him) Aristotle, deserv'd to bee the first in estimation.[4]

Also the poet must be prepared to take endless care in composition. Both critics unquestionably spoke from experience as to the value of industry in writing, and both insist upon limae labor. Horace cautions the beginning

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[1]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 268-269; line 131 (Homer); line 79 (Archilochus); line 279 (Aeschylus).

[2]Ibid., line 310.

[3]Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discoveries", op. cit., p. 94.

[4]Ibid., p. 95.

writer:

> Saepe stilum vertas, iterum quae digna legi sint
> Scripturus, neque te ut miretur turba labores,
> Contentus paucis lectoribus.[1]

("Often must you turn your pen to erase, if you hope to write something worth reading, and you must not strive to catch the wonder of the crowd, but be content with the few as your readers.")

Likewise he speaks of the Roman who has tried to imitate Sophocles, Thespis, and Aeschylus, but who in his ignorance hesitates to blot.[2] Again in writing to the sons of Piso he instructs them to condemn poems which:

> non
> Multa dies et multa litura coercuit atque
> Praesectum decies non castigavit ad unguem.[3]

("Many a day and many a blot has not restrained and refined ten times over to the test of the close-cut nail".)

To Horace <u>exercitatio</u> was so important that he felt that Rome's greatness in military achievement and renown would not exceed her place in the world of letters if her poets would give more time and attention to revision.[4] Unceasing practice is also the keynote in Ben's advice to the potential poet:

> If his wit will not arrive soddainly at the dignitie of the Ancients, let him not fall out with it, quarrell, or be over hastily Angry: offer, to turne it away from Study, in a humor; but come to it againe

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[1] Horace <u>Serm.</u>, i. 10. 72-74.

[2] Horace <u>Epist.</u>, ii. 1. 166 ff.

[3] <u>Ibid.</u>, 3. 292-294.

[4] <u>Ibid.</u>, 289-291

> upon better cogitation: try an other time, with labour. If then it succeed not, cast not away the Quills, yet: nor scratch the Wainescott, beate not the poore Deske; but bring all to the forge, and file, againe; tourne it a newe. There is no Statute law of the Kingdome bidds you bee a Poet, against your will; or the first Quarter. If it come, in a yeare, or two, it is well. The common Rymers powre forth Verses, such as they are, (ex tempore) but there never come from them one Sense, worth the life of a Day....Indeed, things, wrote with labour, deserve to be so read, and will last their Age.[1]

These lines remind one of Horace's remark concerning Lucilius who, he said,

> in hora saepe ducentos,
> Ut magnum, versus dictabat stans pede in uno;[2]
>
> ("Often in an hour, as though a great exploit, he would dictate two hundred lines while standing, as they say, on one foot".)

According to Horace, Lucilius was one poet who had given neither time nor attention to his writings.

> Cum flueret lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles;
> Garrulus atque piger scribendi ferre laborem,
> Scribendi recte: nam ut multum, nil moror.[3]
>
> ("In his muddy stream there was much that you would like to remove. He was wordy, and too lazy to put up with the trouble of writing--of writing correctly, I mean; for as to quantity, I let that pass.")

Thus Horace and Ben contended that art which supplements genius can be acquired by personal effort and study, and that the true poet may attain the bays with a combination of ingenium and patient industry.

In the aim of the poet Ben and Horace were in

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[1] Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discoveries," op. cit., pp. 92-93.

[2] Horace Serm., 1. 4. 9-10

[3] Ibid., lines 11-13.

wholehearted agreement too. Jonson chose for his motto in Volpone the famous lines of Horace on the purpose of writing poetry:

> Aut prodesse volunt aut delectare poetae
> Aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitae.[1]
>
> ("Poets aim either to benefit, or to amuse, or to utter words at once both pleasing and helpful to life".)

Likewise, in the first two lines of the Prologue to Epicoene, Ben says:

> The ends of all, who for the scene doe write,
> Are, or should be, to profit and delight.

Thus he paraphrases the lines of Horace which give the vote of all to the poet "qui miscuit utile dulci, /Lectorem delectando pariterque monendo."[2] ("who has blended profit and pleasure, at once delighting and instructing the reader"). Again Ben speaks on this same topic in the Alchemist:

> Though this pen
> Did neuer aime to grieue, but better men;
> How e'er the age, he lives in, doth endure
> The vices that shee breeds, aboue their cure.
> But when the wholesome remedies are sweet,
> And, in their working, gaine, and profit meet,
> He hopes to find no spirit so much diseas'd
> But will, with such faire correctiues, be pleas'd.[3]

In the same spirit he explains to his hearers the kind of play Bartholomew Fair promises to be :"merry, and as full of

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[1]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 333-334.

[2]Ibid., lines 343-344.

[3]Ben Jonson, The Alchemist, Prologue, lines 11-18.

noise, as sport: made to delight all, and to offend none. Prouided they haue either, the wit, or the honesty to thinke well of themselves."[1] This play is an example of the advice Horace gave in his sententious remark that "ridiculum acri/fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res".[2] (Jesting often cuts hard knots more forcefully and effectively than gravity).

That a poet should function as a molder of morals is another criterion set up by Horace when he gives the duties and privileges of the poet in these lines:

> Os tenerum pueri balbumque poeta figuret,
> Torquet ab obscenis iam nunc sermonibus aurem,
> Mox etiam pectus praeceptis format amicis,
> Asperitatis et invidiae corrector et irae,
> Recte facta refert, orientia tempora notis
> Instruit exemplis, inopem solatur et aegrum.[3]

("The poet fashions the tender, lisping lips of childhood; even then he turns the ear from unseemly words; presently too, he moulds the heart by kindly precepts, correcting roughness and envy and anger. He tells of noble deeds, equips the rising age with the famous examples, and to the helpless and sick at heart brings comfort").

This theory Horace puts into practice in the Odes, especially in Book III when he comes forward to instruct a Rome which is about to enter an altered world. Ben Jonson reiterates the sentiments of Horace in his dedication

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[1] Ben Jonson, Bartholomew Fair, Induction, lines 82-84.

[2] Horace Serm., i. 10. 14-15.

[3] Horace Epist., ii. 1. 126-131.

to Volpone:

> For, if men will impartially, and not a-squint, looke toward the offices and function of a Poet, they will easily conclude to themselues, the impossibility of any mans being the good Poet, without first being a good man. He that is said to be able to informe yong-men to all good disciplines, inflame growne-men to all vertues, keepe old-men in their best and supreme state, or as they decline to child-hood, recouer them to their first strength; that comes forth the interpreter and arbiter of nature, a teacher of things diuine, no lesse then humane, a master in manners; and can alone, (or with a few) effect the businesse of man-kind: this, I take him, is no subiect for pride, and ignorance to exercise their rayling rhetorique upon.[1]

Such examples then, prove that the ideas of the aim and function of the poet were the same to Jonson and Horace. Horace had learned from Aristotle's Poetics; Jonson had learned from Aristotle and Horace.

Consistency in characterisation[2] was another literary canon Horace advocated and one which Jonson followed religiously in all his characters. His "humours" amount to the same thing as Horace's decorum, and his characters are so consistently constructed that each bears out one trait only. His characters surely carry out Horace's advice:

> Sit Medea ferox invictaque, flebilis Ino,
> Perfidus Ixion, Io vaga, tristis Orestes.
> Si quid inexpertum scaenae committis et audes
> Personam formare novam, servetur ad imum,

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[1]Ben Jonson, Volpone, Dedication, lines 20-31

[2]Aristotle, Poetics, trans. S.H. Butcher (Chicago, Illinois: Henry Regnery Company, 1949), Section xv, p. 22: "The fourth point is consistency: for even though the original character, who suggested the type, be inconsistent, still he must be consistently inconsistent".

Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.[1]

("Let Medea be fierce and unyielding, Ino tearful, Ixion forsworn, Io a wanderer, Orestes sorrowful. If it is an untried theme you entrust to the stage, and if you boldly fashion a fresh character, have it kept to the end even as it came forth at first, and have it self-consistent").

Certainly Jonson's creations such as Kitely, Morose, Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, Subtle, Volpone, ad infinitum were all of a piece and satisfy the criterion laid down by Horace.

By means of a brief and humorous exhortation at the beginning of Ars Poetica[2] Horace stresses the need of unity in writing. He tells the sons of Piso that unity can be secured by harmony and proportion. Then he compares the poet with a painter and a sculptor whose completed works must be unified and undistorted. He summarizes his advice with these words: "Denique sit quod vis, simplex dumtaxat et unum".[3] ("In short, whatever the writing is, let it have simplicity and unity at least.") In turn, Jonson in his Discoveries demands that unity be considered a requisite in writing. According to his theory the parts of any literary work should be so knit together that nothing in the structure can be taken away without impairing it. He compares the building of a house with the writing of a poem; both require proportion and unity. In the

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[1]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 125-127

[2]Ibid., lines 1-45.

[3]Ibid., line 23.

following passage he refers to the violation of unity of time:

> Though neede make many Poets, and some such
> As art, and nature have not betterd much;
> Yet ours, for want, hath not so lou'd the stage.
> As he dare serve th' ill customes of the age:
> Or purchase your delight at such a rate,
> As, for it, he himselfe must justly hate,
> To make a child, now swaddled, to proceede
> Man, and then shoute vp, in one beard and weede
> Past threescore yeeres: or with three rustie swords
> And helpe of some few foot-and halfe foote words,
> Fight over Yorke and Lancasters long iarres:
> And in the tyring-house bring wounds, to scarres.[1]

Horace had said that the work must be uniform[2] and cautioned the writer that

> Qui variare cupit rem prodigialiter unam,
> Delphinum silvis appingit, fluctibus aprum.[3]
>
> ("The man who tries to vary a single subject in monstrous fashion is like a painter adding a dolphin to the woods, a boar to the waves").

The Aristotelian advice given by Horace was accepted by Ben Jonson. His love of clarity and system, in addition to his knowledge of the classics, drove him to types of characters with one dominant trait, and feeling that this should be the accepted method of characterization, he suggested it as the method to be followed in the portrayal of people in all plays.

Both have similar ideas on themes for comedies and

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[1]Ben Jonson, Every Man in his Humour, Prologue, lines 1-18.

[2]Horace Epist., ii, 3, 23.

[3]Ibid., lines 29-30.

tragedies. Horace made the difference clear by illustrating that the feast of Thyestes was unfit to be told in the tone of the comic sock.[1] Each style of writing, he thought, should follow the rules laid down for it. In like manner Jonson hopes that his audience will be pleased to see --

> deeds and language, such as men do use,
> And persons, such as comedy would choose,
> When she would shew an image of the times,
> And sport with human follies, not with crimes.[2]

Thus Jonson and Horace make the distinction between comedy and tragedy which is from the precept of Aristotle, who assigns the ridiculous as the immediate subject of comedy but makes the crimes of men the particular object of a tragic poet.[3] Thus Jonson did not allow Volpone and Morose the lofty strains of Catiline, nor does Sejanus appear in the guise of a comic person. Each keeps his own place according to the rules laid down by Horace and his predecessor.

The guidance of a competent judge was insisted upon by Jonson and Horace. The latter praises Quintilius as a frank and sincere critic and says to him:

> Quintilio si quid recitares, "corrige, sodes,
> Hoc," aiebat, "et hoc". melius te posse negares
> Bis terque expertum frustra, delere iubebat
> Et male tornatos incudi reddere versus.
> Si defendere delictum quam vertere malles,
> Nullum ultra verbum aut operam insumebat inanem,
> Quin sine rivali teque et tua solus amares.[4]

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[1]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 89-92.

[2]Ben Jonson, Every Man in his Humour, Prologue lines 21-24.

[3]Aristotle, Poetics, op. cit., Section v. pp. 7-8.

[4]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 438-444.

("If you recited anything to Quintilius he would say: 'Correct this if you will, and this.' If you insisted, after two or three vain attempts, that you were not able to better the passage, he advised you to blot it out, and return your ill-shaped verses to the anvil. If you preferred defending your mistake to amending it, he would waste not a word more, would spend no fruitless toil, to prevent your loving yourself and your work alone without a rival".)

As far as Horace was concerned Quintilius had no peer[1] and embodied all the qualities of honor, loyalty, and truth. Using him as a model, Horace gives the function of the true critic:

> Vir bonus et prudens versus reprehendet inertis,
> Culpabit duros, incomptis allinet atrum
> Transverso calamo signum, ambitiosa recidet
> Ornamenta, parum claris lucem dare coget,
> Arguet ambigue dictum, mutanda notabit,
> Fiet Aristarchus;[2] nec dicet: "cur ego amicum
> Offendam in nugis?" Hae nugae seria ducent
> In mala derisum semel exceptumque sinistre.[3]

("An honest and sensible man will censure lifeless lines, he will find fault with harsh ones; if they are graceless, he will draw his pen across and smear them with a black stroke; he will cut away pretentious ornament; he will force you to flood the obscure with light, will question the doubtful phrase, will mark what should be changed, will prove an Aristarchus. He will not say, 'Why should I give offence to a friend about trifles?' These trifles will bring that friend into serious trouble, if once he has been laughed down and given an unlucky reception".)

To this passage Jonson refers in his Discoveries when he

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[1]Horace Carm., i. 24.

[2]The name of Aristarchus, famous as an Homeric scholar of Alexandria in the second century B.C., had become proverbial as that of a keen critic. Cf. Fairclough, Ad Epist., ii. 3. 450.

[3]Horace Epist., ii. 3. 445-452.

explains that the office of a true critic is not to

> damme an innocent Syllabe but lay the words together, and amend them; judge sincerely of the Author and his matter, which is the signe of solid and perfect learning in a man. Such was Horace an Author of much Civilitie; and (if any one among the heathen can be) the best master, both of vertue, and wisdome; an excellent, and true judge upon cause and reason; not because he thought so; but because he knew so, out of use and experience.[1]

That good diction was also important for successful writing was pointed out by Ben and Horace. Ben preferred "pure and neat Language...yet plaine and customary."[2] To him the best style of writing combined lucid expression with careful reasoning and clear thinking, or as he says:

> The congruent, and harmonious fitting of parts in a sentence, hath almost the fastning, and force of knitting, and connection: As in stones well squar'd, which will rise strong a great way without mortar.[3]

Horace too advocates the use of common words put together so skillfully that the familiar word produces an air of novelty.[4] That he thought a discreet coinage of words should be allowed since usage is the law of speech is proved by these lines:

> Licuit semperque licebit
> Signatum praesente nota producere nomen.[5]

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[1]Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discovries" op. cit., pp. 97-98.

[2]Ibid., p. 72.

[3]Ben Jonson, "Discoveries", op. cit., p. 76.

[4]Horace Epist., ll. 3. 46-48.

[5]Ibid., lines 58-59.

("It has ever been and ever will be, permitted to issue words stamped with the mint-mark of the day").

Horace emphasizes the thought that, in spite of a critic's advice to a poet, the forms of speech are not determined by an individual but by usage, "quem penes arbitrium est et ius, et norma loquendi",[1] ("within whose power lies the judgment, the right, and the standard of speech"). Thus Ben and Horace agreed that the language of poetry should be written as far as possible in the language used and understood by those who read it. Evidently both recognized that poets do not write for poets alone, but for men. As Horace said:

> mortalia facta peribunt,
> Nedum sermonum stet honos et gratia vivax.[2]
>
> ("The achievements of men pass; still less may endure the repute and charm of modes of speech").

Horace and Jonson commented also on the attitude of the audience and its acceptance of the dramas which were staged in their times. Horace relates that the audience has degenerated to the point that it listens no longer for the noble words but takes delight in seeing troops of soldiers and horses passing by, or kings being dragged in. Or in the middle of a play the audience calls for "a bear or for boxers" since it seems these are the things the rabble prefers.[3] Comparable to this is Jonson's descrip-

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[1] Horace Epist., ii. 3. 72

[2] Ibid., lines 68-69

[3] Ibid., l. 182-198

tion of the state of the theatre in his day. He says:

> If thou art one that tak'st vp, and but a Pretender, beware of what hands thou receiust thy commoditie; for thou wert neuer more fair in the way to be cos'ned (them in this Age) in Poetry, especially in Playes: wherein, now the Concupiscence of Daunces and of antickes so raigneth, as to runne away from Nature, and be afraid of her, is the onely point of art that tickles the Spectators...For they commend Writers as they doe Fencers or Wrastlers; who if they come in robustuously, and put for it with a great deal of violence, are receiu'd for the brauer fellowes; when many times their own rudenesse is the cause of their disgrace, and a little touch of their Aduersary gives all that boisterous force the foyle...But I giue thee this warning, that there is a great difference between those, that (to gain the opinion of Copie) vtter all they can, how euer vnfitly; and those that vse election and a meane. For it is only the disease of the vnskilfull to thinke rude things greater then polish'd; or scatter'd more numerous then compos'd.[1]

He addresses the audience again and asks it to make a difference between "Poetique elues and Poets", and advises that all who "dabble in the inke and defile quills" are not poets.[2] Such were the writers whom Ben Jonson censured. To him nothing was more preposterous than to praise as the best writings those "which a man would scarce vouchsafe to wrap any wholesome drug in; he would never light his tobacco with them".[3] This remark reminds one of Horace's statement that sooner or later the work of a poor poet is found worthless, and that his books will serve as wrapping

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[1]Ben Jonson, The Alchemist, To The Reader, lines 1-8; 15-21; 30-35.

[2]Ben Jonson, The Staple of News, Prologue, lines 20-22.

[3]Ben Jonson, "Timber: or Discoveries", op. cit., p. 26.

paper for "tus et odores/et piper et quidquid chartis amicitur ineptis"[1] ("frankincense and perfumes and pepper and everything else that is wrapped in sheets of useless paper"). Time then, according to Horace and Ben, is the best judge of worth.

Thus in Jonson's writings can be found many of the ideas Horace had in De Arte Poetica and his other writings on literary criticism. Both authors are appealing for a fuller consciousness of the poet's mission. Both are inculcating obedience to certain standards of writing, and advocating unwearying care in composition. With the poet both associate genius, inspiration, and impeccable style. Horace's ideas are so merged in Jonson that at times it is difficult to separate them from the English writer's own ideas. For these reasons the following commendatory poem is fitting for Ben Jonson in reference to his use of Horace:

> 'Twas not enough, Ben Jonson, to be thought
> Of English poets best, but to have brought,
> In greater state, to their acquaintance, one
> Made equal to himself and thee; that none
> Might be thy second: while thy glory is
> To be the Horace of our times and his.[2]

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[1]Horace Epist., II. 1. 269-270.

[2]Lord Herbert of Cherbury, "To his friend Master Ben Jonson on his Translation", The Works of Ben Jonson, ed. Lieut.-Col. Francis Cunningham, III, 367.

CONCLUSION

In such ways, then, as I have pointed out, are found the similarities between Horace and Ben Jonson. Within their early lives were molding influences which determined the development of the men themselves. Horace's education under the moral guidance of his father led him to keen observation of men and manners while the intellectual guidance of the best teachers of Rome and Greece developed in him a desire for the most exact kind of writing. In turn, Horace himself became one of the greatest influences upon the writing of Ben Jonson. The latter's teacher, William Camden, had laid the foundation upon which Jonson's love of Horace and his imitation of the Roman poet grew. Within their very lives were some parallels, more or less marked, but the final test of their relation to each other must be judged by the poetry each wrote. The unmistakable Horatian quality if found throughout Ben Jonson's works. Much of the content of Horace is also found in Jonson: his ideas, his sentiments, his purpose in writing, his rules for good writing. Jonson's poetry, therefore, is the torch which carries the flame of Horace's genius to succeeding ages, and the echoes of the Latin bard are nowhere in greater abundance than in the <u>Works</u> of the great English classicist.

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